

Polish strike suspended in compromise deal

Leaders of Solidarity, Poland's independent trade union, last night suspended Tuesday's general strike but threatened possible strike action to back the call for independent farmers' unions, Government concessions on hours and union access to the media prompted the Soviet press to sharpen attacks on Solidarity, accusing it of undermining the state.

Union warning over farmers' demands

Warsaw, Feb 1.—Solidarity, the Polish free trade union movement, tonight suspended a one-hour national warning strike set for Tuesday but threatened to consider future strike action to support the cause of Rural Solidarity, the independent farmers' union.

The union's national consultative commission announced its decision after a day-long meeting to review last Saturday's agreement with the authorities over working norms and the union's access to the mass media.

The decision-making body formally ratified the government-union agreements. The union said Saturday's compromise agreements did not fully live up to public expectation but it acknowledged them as "an initial step".

Tuesday's warning strike had originally been called to back a campaign by Poland's three and a half million private farmers for the right to set up their own independent unions. The issue of Rural Solidarity was left unresolved after the Government-union talks, but a Government commission today began separate talks with the farmers in what appeared to be a breakthrough.

The official news agency PAP reported that the Supreme Court would give its ruling on the legalization of the Rural Solidarity within 10 days.

"We do not feel that a strike (on Tuesday) would be purposeful, considering that the talks between the Government and the farmers have not under way", Mr Karol Modzelewski, Solidarity's chief spokesman, told a news conference.

But Mr Modzelewski said a general strike could be called if the farmers' dispute is not resolved.

Mr Lech Walesa, Solidarity's leader, in keeping with Government pledges to give his union access to the mass media,

confirmed the threat of a general strike.

"We continue to have this weapon, and will not hesitate to use it if there is an attack on us or the farmers", Mr Walesa stated.

The 50-member consultative commission had come under some pressure today to withhold ratification of the new accord, but when a resolution was adopted there were only six votes against.

Mr Janusz Onyszkiewicz, another Solidarity spokesman, said the wave of strikes and work boycotts mounted by Solidarity in the past two weeks had persuaded the Government to soften its stand on the question of free Saturdays and the mass media.

"But it was not a total victory. It was a compromise. We met the Government halfway", he said.

Solidarity, which has demanded the immediate introduction of a five-day working week, agreed to accept one working Saturday a month. The Government had ordered two working Saturdays a month.

The resolution said Solidarity would continue to struggle for the 40-hour week, but would appeal to all Poles to put in one eight-hour working Saturday because of the country's dire economic situation.

The resolution also stated that Solidarity demanded full information on the state of the national economy and on the proposed economic reform, as well as public control of fiscal policy.

The question of a six-day-old general strike in the southern province of Bielsko Biala was raised during the press conference, and Mr Onyszkiewicz said the commission had no control over local disputes.

"We can appeal for local strikes to stop, but we cannot order them", he said.

Solidarity has sent a delegation to Bielsko Biala asking the strikers to return to work.

Russia cites CIA 'plots' in reply to Washington

From Michael Binyon
Moscow, Feb 1

The Russians hit back sharply this weekend at President Reagan's accusation that they were encouraging international terrorism, describing the White House criticism as a new round in America's unbridled slander campaign against the Soviet Union.

An official statement by Tass said the contention that Moscow was involved in terrorism was absurd and had clearly been made in give fresh impetus to the anti-Soviet psychosis being fanned in America.

"Naturally no evidence to support these inventions is given because there is no such evidence in existence. Terrorism as a means of attaining political aims is deeply alien to the Soviet Union."

Tass said the real centre controlling international terrorism was the American Central Intelligence Agency, an organization of "terror, subversion and provocation". It added that American leaders had several times called for the CIA to be given a free hand abroad, which actually amounted to elevating terrorism to the rank of state policy.

The Tass statement gave in evidence a detailed list of plots and assassinations carried out by the CIA round the world, citing the attempts on the lives of President Castro of Cuba, Patrice Lumumba, the former Congo Prime Minister, General Rene Schneider in Chile, the overthrow of the Mossadek Government in Iran and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana, and the financing of South Africa of rebels in Angola.

Tass directly accused the CIA of perpetrating the "foul political murder" of Signor Aldo Moro, the former Italian Prime Minister, because he had been an "undesirable" to Washington.

It said the CIA was the only intelligence agency whose direct interference in Italian politics had been proved.

In El Salvador, American military support had helped reactionary forces conduct a "veritable war" against the working people, making ruthless repression the official policy.

In Afghanistan, the Americans were supporting "criminal bands" who committed terror and plunder and were frustrating the process of rebuilding the country.

The Tass statement accused American officials of using terrorism at home for political ends, killing undesirable politicians and suppressing dissidents. The news agency cited the assassinations of Martin Luther King, and participants in the anti-war movement.

At the same time the authorities were continuing in attacks on foreign diplomats and diplomatic missions at the United Nations.

"One has only to look at the facts to see that the United States is the main breeding, organizer and planner of international terrorism", Tass concluded.

The Russians have clearly been startled by the suddenness and vehemence of the attacks on them by the new President and by Mr Alexander Haig, his Secretary of State, which they attribute to the Administration's need to find a new anti-Soviet policy to replace the discredited Carter campaign.



President Reagan: 'New anti-Soviet campaign'.



Winter sun at the meridian: Cutty Sark silhouetted against the Greenwich sky yesterday.

Mrs Williams decides this week on NEC seat

By George Clark
Political Correspondent

Mrs Shirley Williams, a leading member of the new Council for Social Democracy, will decide this week whether to resign from the national executive of the Labour Party where she has been under attack for seeming to be engaged in the formation of a new centre party.

Mr Michael Foot, Leader of the Opposition, will be seeing Mrs Williams, a former minister, today, to try to persuade her to remain with the party. Leaders of her union, the Association of Professional, Execu-

tive, Clerical and Computer Staff, appealed to her over the weekend to "stay and fight" within the party for the changes in policy and organization that she wants.

There is no sign, so far, that any other Labour backbencher is ready to follow the example of Dr David Owen, the former Foreign Secretary, who announced on Friday that he will not be standing as a Labour candidate at the next election, though he will remain as Labour MP for Plymouth, Devonport, for the duration of the present Parliament.

Another leading member of

the dissident group, Mr William Rodgers, MP for Teesside, Stockton, has resigned from the Shadow Cabinet, but he stays on as a Labour MP and is delaying for a few weeks any announcement he may have to make about his future.

In a speech to miners in Gareshead on Saturday, however, he gave a clear indication that his disillusionment with the party is not likely to be dispelled unless the idea of having an electoral college to elect the party leader is abandoned.

"It is the principle of an electoral college that is wrong,"

the proportions are trifling matter", he said. "It is wrong that trade union block votes should determine who should be the Prime Minister."

In a reference to Mrs Williams yesterday, Mr Wedgwood Benn said: "I do not think it is moral for someone to sit in the highest echelons of one party in order to get enough time to prepare another party."

He was repeating an accusation that he made directly to Mrs Williams at the party executive meeting last Wednesday, and it is a point that must have

Continued on page 2, col 7

China cancels orders for modern plants

From Peter Hazelhurst
Tokyo, Feb 1

China seems to be cutting back on its modernization programme again and has suspended work on two large petrochemical plants in Nanjing and Shengli in the province of Shandong which were to be built by Japanese companies. As a result, the authorities in Peking are expected to cancel orders for equipment for the project.

A Japanese consortium, including C. Itoh and Company, the large trading house, and the Toyo Engineering Corporation has already begun to construct equipment for the plants.

This is the second big blow this year to Japanese businessmen who have won lucrative contracts in China since a more moderate regime assumed power in Peking.

The latest decision by China to cancel orders for two petrochemical plants has more than alarmed Japanese businessmen and indicates that China has probably over-extended itself in modernizing its industry.

"We will hold talks with Chinese representatives in the near future to find out what has happened", a senior official in the Japanese Ministry for Trade and Industry says.

Resources strained: The cumulative effect of prolonged drought in northern China in conjunction with severe floods in central provinces is imposing a severe strain on the country's resources, according to a United Nations mission back in Geneva after almost three weeks in China (Our Geneva Correspondent writes).

Sent by the United Nations disaster relief office (UNDRO) to assess emergency needs, the mission has reported that desperate heavy losses in crops and livestock, basic minimal needs of the population are being met. But the situation could worsen over the next few months.

Wildspread unrest, page 7

Savings bonds 'unfair to building societies'

Mr Richard Weir, secretary-

general, of the Building Societies Association, yesterday accused the Government of unfair competition amounting to almost an abuse of power in the battle to attract personal savings.

By declaring that it would raise the money it needed by book or by credit, the Government was spreading with the voice of the monopolist, he said.

If its rivalry with the societies continued, higher mortgage rates were the only possible outcome.

The government decision to raise large sums from personal savers would "reverberate through every building society decision on interest rates and mortgage rates for some time to come", he said. The societies did not object to fair competition from the banks; national savings or anyone else, but this was not fair competition.

"I do not think we can complain about the Government being in the personal savings business. It would be foolish to deny they have a right to be in the sector, or competing with the building societies for a part of the market", he conceded.

But index-linked bonds offered by the Government, which had responsibility for the inflation rate, made it judge and jury on savings rates.

Mr Robert Audley, Conservative MP for Chichester and Lynton, said yesterday: "Mr Weir's statement represents the typical whining we have come to expect from leaders of the Building Societies Association to excuse their own commercial inadequacies."

"Mr Weir probably has not noticed from his ivory tower that the inflation rate is falling rapidly. Perhaps he can explain to his bemused customers how such a situation can lead to mortgage repayment increases."

Moscow's attack on Solidarity sharpens

From Michael Binyon
Moscow, Feb 1

The Russians gave a clear sign this weekend that they now regard Solidarity as a dangerous form of political opposition to the Polish Communist Party that is quickly leading the country to economic chaos and political destabilization.

Over the past few days the tone of Soviet reporting on the Polish crisis has changed significantly. Instead of accusing Solidarity of harbouring anti-Communists within its ranks, the Russians are now accusing the union itself and its leaders of trying to undermine the Polish state.

A Tass report from Warsaw today said Solidarity was now putting forward political demands, such as the formation of a rural branch of the union. This would split the peasant movement, interfere with food supplies to the towns and worsen the already serious economic crisis in the country.

Indeed, the Soviet press had not minced words over the weekend in describing the general situation in Poland as

extremely grave. The Russians' alarm can only have been increased by Solidarity's partial victory in obtaining concessions from the Government on Saturday working hours and an agreement to allow the union to produce a weekly newspaper and present a weekly television programme.

This will be seen here as a provocative challenge to the Communist Party's monopoly of power, and further evidence that one concession only leads to further demands which eventually destroy the party's authority altogether.

Yesterday, a strongly critical report in Izvestia accused the union leaders of embarking on a path of "blatant abuse of such an extreme method of solving disputes as the strike". The newspaper said it looked as though they were unable to use any other means.

The report, written before a meeting was announced for one working Saturday a month, said the recent boycott of Saturday working clearly showed that Solidarity activists were making deliberate

attempts to undermine the Polish state.

President Reagan: 'New anti-Soviet campaign'.

attempts to undermine the Polish state.

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Budget move to ease industry's taxation burden

The Government is considering a fundamental switch in taxation from the industrial sector towards the financial sector, though whether there will be a "windfall" tax on clearing banks' profits introduced in next month's Budget is still in doubt. The Prime Minister is known to be critical of the part played by the banks in expanding the money supply. It is also thought possible that the Chancellor will cut interest rates in the Budget. Page 21

Bomb warning to shops by Scotland Yard

While experts are examining four bombs left in a west London store, Scotland Yard warned shop security staff and the public to be alert for incendiary devices. The bombs discovered in a store on Saturday are similar to those used by the Provisional IRA. Page 4

Europe MPs call for Pretoria oil embargo

Brussels MPs examining South Africa's oil imports have accused European and American companies of playing a key role in helping Pretoria to maintain its supplies despite an embargo operated by most oil exporting countries. Page 6

Iran confrontation

President Bani-Sadr of Iran appears to have spurned any compromise with the ruling Islamic Republican Party. He said the party's aims were "to change Iran into a graveyard". Page 6

Bringing seamen home

Striking seamen stranded in ports all over the world are to be brought home with the aid of cash sought by their leaders from more than a hundred unions. Page 2

Onslaught on public sector pay curb

The government's attempt to impose a 6 per cent cap limit on public sector pay rises will come under pressure this week from leaders of the water workers, hospital manual staff, civil servants and power station workers. Page 2

Times' negotiations: Printing union

Leaders enter talks today with an estimate of a fifty-fifty chance of success. Page 12

Keyboard instruments: A two-page Special

Report on the market in Britain for pianos and early instruments. Page 13

Telecommunications in the Arab World

A three-page Special Report on the impact of modern electronics on a traditional way of life. Page 17-19

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Letters: On the Nationality Bill, from Mr Anthony McSheehy, and others; Palestine, from Professor M. Mazawi, and Saikh Mubarak Ahmad.

Leading articles: Union block votes; Community Land Bill.

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Art, page 11

William Mann celebrates the eightieth birthday of the singer Gerhard Hirsch, and reviews the rebirth of the Stravinsky Festival.

Philip Howard on Johnsonian lexicography.

Features, pages 7, 14

Lord Chalfont on the new danger signals in the Middle East; For Hooley on a change of heart for the disabled.

Sport, pages 8-10

Regby Union: Burgess report requires positive action; Cricket: England end days of inactivity; Skating: World Cup victory for Sweden; Swimming: England outstanding in America.

Business News, pages 20-25

Financial Editor: Trustee Savings Banks in a hurry; how Ronnick went without a fight; Business features: David Hewson on a dispute between travel agents over package holiday selling.

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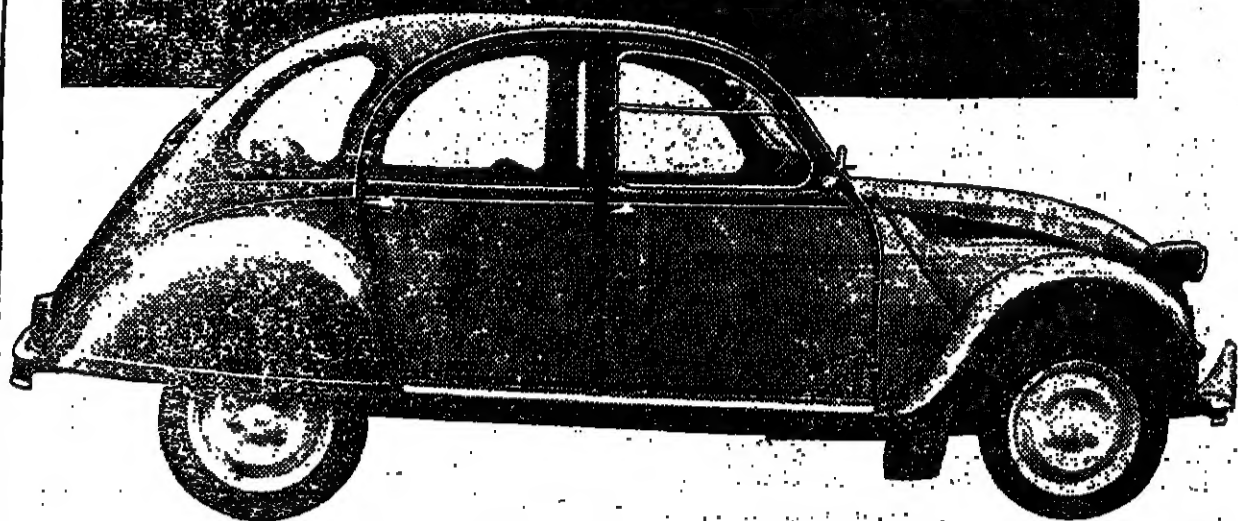
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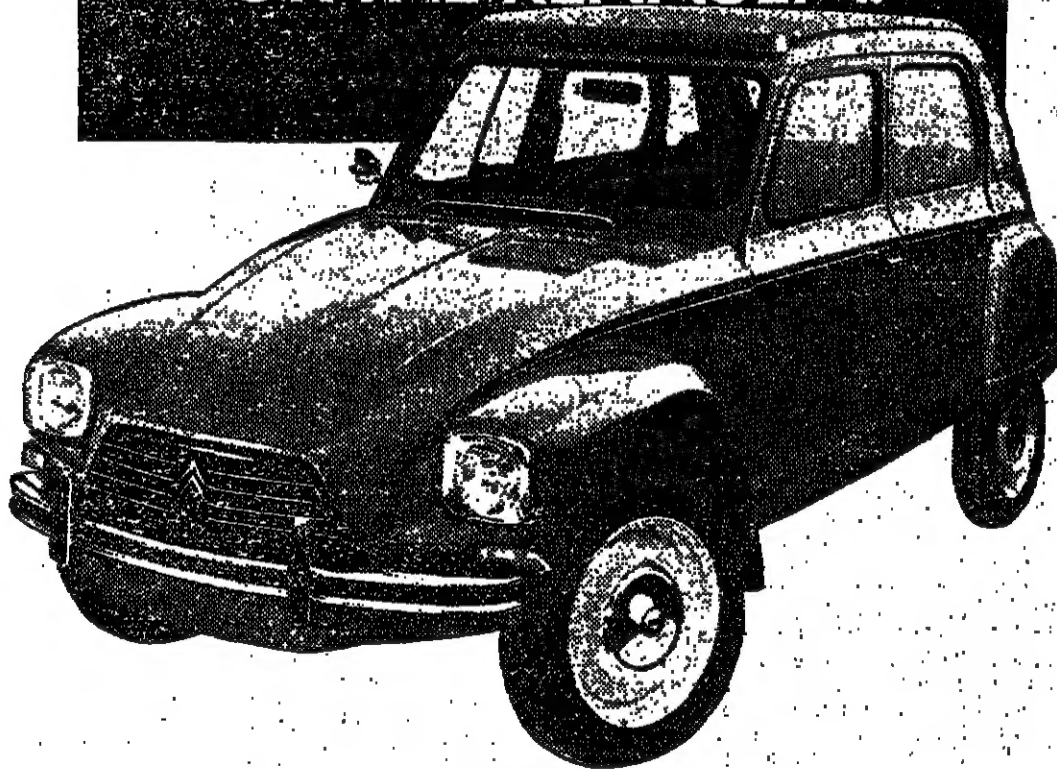
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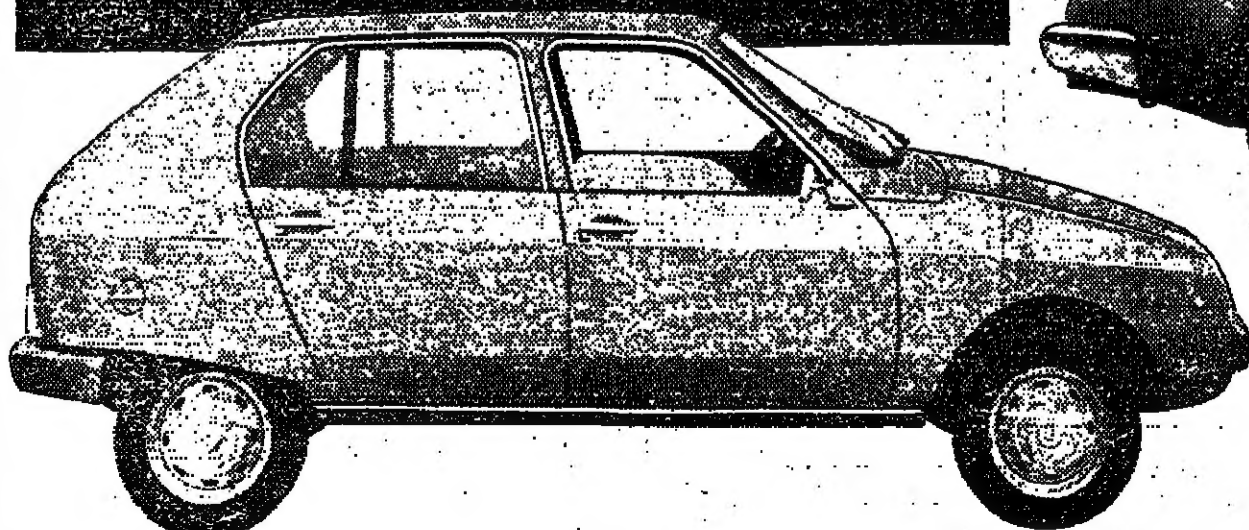
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HOME NEWS

Scotland Yard warns shop security staff to be wary of bombs

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Reporter

Explosives experts will today examine four incendiary devices, built into cassette tape boxes, which were found in a West London furniture store on Saturday. The devices are understood to be similar to those used by the Provisional IRA.

Some large West End stores were searched for explosives yesterday and Scotland Yard asked security staff to check shops before they opened today.

"There is always a possibility that more of these devices were planted. We are advising store security staff to be on the lookout today to make sure there is nothing out of place. We would also urge the public to be on the alert", Scotland Yard said.

The cassettes containing explosives were left in C and M Discount Furniture Warehouse in High Street, Southall, on Saturday. Shortly before closing time one was discovered by a customer who raised the alarm. The store was evacuated and another three explosive cassettes were found hidden in furniture.

One of the bombs is reported to have started smoking but was made safe without anyone being injured.

The cassette devices are said to be complex and unlikely to be the work of amateurs. Incendiaries of that type have been used by the Provisional

IRA with some success in Northern Ireland during attacks on shopping centres.

They have also been used in Britain and a number were discovered in central London shops during the bombing campaign of 1976 to 1977.

If the Southall bombs were the work of the Provisionals it would mark their fourth attack in London since last December. The first was the bombing of a Territorial Army drill hall in Hammersmith; shortly before the New Year an attack was attempted on a gas works in east London and last month a building at RAF Uxbridge was devastated.

After that last attack the Provisionals announced they were opening a fresh offensive in mainland Britain, and Scotland Yard declared that an active service unit could be operating in the London area. Yesterday members of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist squad were examining the shop and were joined by Commander Michael Richards, who has a service unit could be operating in the London area.

So far no group has admitted planting the incendiaries and detectives are waiting for a pronouncement from explosives men at the Woolwich Arsenal. A clear reason for the attack has still to be found if it is not the work of the Provisionals. If it is, there will be some surprise that they have chosen a target so far from the centre of London and with no apparent significance.

£7.71 council house average rent

By Christopher Warman
Local Government Correspondent

The average council house rent in England and Wales last year was £7.71 a week before rebates, according to statistics published today by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The figure, based on returns for April, 1980, compares with £6.40 a week the year before, an increase of 20 per cent. The inflation rate over that period was 22 per cent.

For the coming year, Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, has asked for rent increases of about £3.25.

At the time of the survey council house rents were lowest in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, where the average weekly rent was £6.63. In other regions the averages were £6.91 in the North, £6.92 in the East Midlands, £7.09 in the North-west, £7.33 in East Anglia, £7.83 in the West Midlands, £7.85 in Wales, £8.08 in the South-west, and £8.89 in the South-east.

The survey, which covered 86 per cent of council houses in England and Wales, shows that rents on older properties are lower than on new properties.

About one million households out of an estimated total of 5,243,000 council homes received rent rebates during a sample week in May, 1980, with an average rebate of £4.40. The previous year an estimated 960,000 households received rebates averaging £3.61.

Islington council has announced a rent increase of about £3 a week, or 33 per cent. *Renting Statistics in April 1980* (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, 1 Buckingham Place, London SW1E 6HS, £10).

Friendly farewell for Anna Ford

ITN said after the announcement on Saturday that Anna Ford would read her last news bulletin in March that her departure date was mutually and amicably agreed.

Miss Ford and Angela Rippon, who read her last BBC news on Friday, will present programmes on breakfast television when it starts in 1983.

Assault-case police team plea rejected

By Our Crime Reporter

Proposals for a detective force to investigate complaints of serious assault by policemen have, it is understood, been rejected by a Home Office working party which will report its findings in the next few weeks.

Instead of the special squad, the working party suggests, the existing system of inquiries could be strengthened by making it mandatory for chief constables to call in officers from another force to investigate a complaint.

At the same time a figure such as the Director of Public Prosecutions or the chairman of the Police Complaints Board could act as an independent overseer and act as a link between the investigators and the investigated.

The possibility of a special squad was put forward last year in the first triennial report of the Police Complaints Board. It was suggested the squad should have an independent head with some judicial experience.

The report came after several cases of death in police custody or during arrest had caused a controversy. Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, immediately announced the formation of the working party.

The working party included representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Police Superintendents' Association, the Police Federation, the Metropolitan Police, the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Police Complaints Board and the Home Office.

The police representatives argued against the formation of the squad on practical grounds while the DPP felt that an independent head, possibly deciding on matters such as prosecutions, would conflict with his role.

An examination of the practicalities showed that a squad, established regionally or nationally, might be expensive and under used. Questions arose over the type of officer seconded to work for it.

The working party has also found difficulty in establishing what would constitute a serious assault as opposed to one which did not require investigation.

Mr Whitelaw may consider passing the report on to the Police Advisory Board for evaluation before taking a decision.

Data protection challenge to UK

By Frances Gibb

Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, will face renewed pressure from Conservative and Labour MPs this week over privacy legislation after the signing last week by seven countries of an European convention on data protection.

The convention, which provides for the protection of personal data kept on computers, with the option of including manual files, and gives citizens the right to know what records are stored, opened to member states for signing last Wednesday.

France, West Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Luxembourg and Turkey have signed the convention, providing the necessary five signatures for the convention to come into force in three months.

Confusion over new benefits scheme

By Pat Healy
Social Services Correspondent

First impressions of the new supplementary benefit scheme indicate that the Government has not achieved its promise of a simple system with clear and legally defined rights for payment.

In the first four weeks of the scheme, monitoring by nine welfare agencies found

that social security staff were inadequately trained and consequently misinformed claimants.

Some staff made decisions unlawfully, by applying the new rules to claims made before they took effect, a report published today by the Child Poverty Action Group says.

The new scheme was introduced on November 24. It is not clear whether the confusion

Files disclose extent of spy's access to sensitive Far East intelligence

Burgess knew US analysis of Russian aid

By Peter Hennessy

Any lingering impression that Guy Burgess, the British diplomat who spied for Russia as a low-ranking official of outrageous personal habits with little information of value to pass to Soviet intelligence is dispelled by recently declassified Foreign Office documents.

The papers, discovered at the Public Record Office last week, show that during his time as a grade 4 officer in the junior branch of the Diplomatic Service on the China and Philippines desk of the Foreign Office, which spanned the period between Mao Tse-tung's seizure of power in Peking in September, 1949, and the outbreak of the Korean War in June, 1950, Burgess saw reports from some of the most sensitive British and American intelligence organizations.

They included Whitehall's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), the War Office's M12 branch of military intelligence, and similar material from the Supreme Command Allied Powers, Tokyo, General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in the Far East.

The Burgess files, contained in the records of the Foreign Office's Far Eastern Department for 1950 and released under the 30-year rule, were discovered by Mr Christopher Catherwood, a graduate student of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

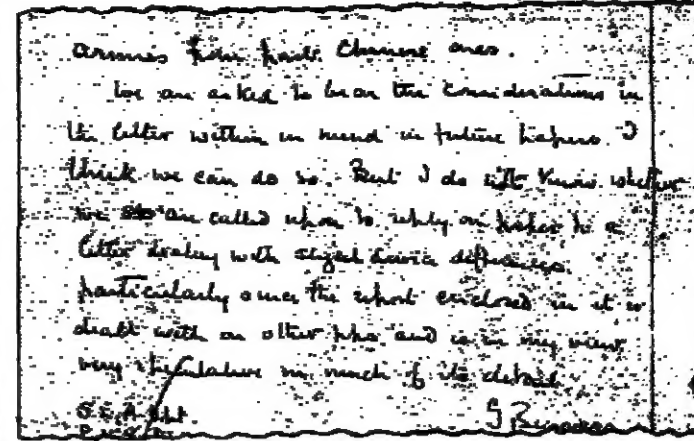
Of particular value to Mos-



Guy Burgess: Scornful.

cow would have been an M12 report of April 5, 1950, containing "a summary of all information received concerning Russian assistance to the Chinese Communist forces" about which Burgess wrote a long minute, in his customary bright blue ink and neat hand, on April 29. In it Burgess makes clear his knowledge that "these papers contain the JIC view on the nature of Russian air assistance".

The secret M12 report goes into immense detail listing, by name in some cases, Soviet military personnel drafted into China after the revolution, the weapons they brought with them, including Spitfires and Mustangs acquired by the Soviet



A letter in Burgess's hand casts doubt on a report.

Union during the Second World War, the airfields they were constructing, and the training offered to Mao's forces.

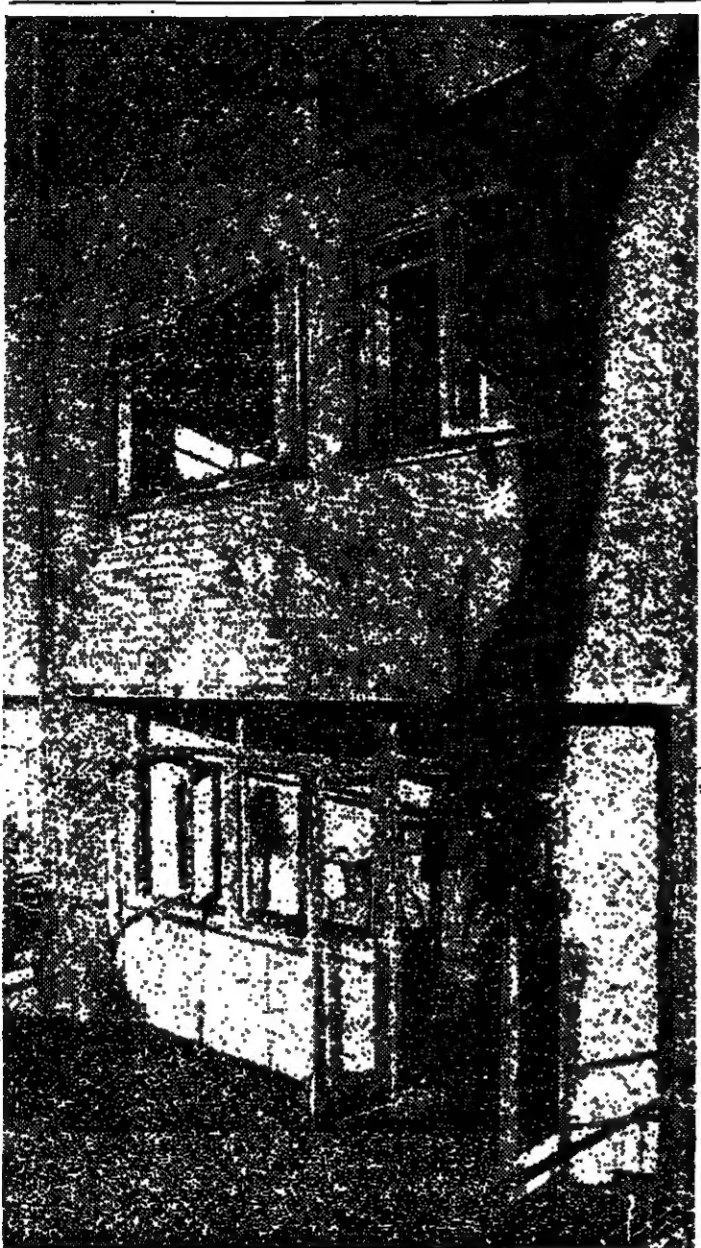
The outer cover of the Foreign Office file in which the report is preserved describes it as "compiled by the War Office setting out the most important information available to them".

The view Burgess minuted for his Foreign Office employers, it is not his Soviet patron's, argues that: "On the one hand, if the Russians lead modern jet fighters it is thought likely that a Chinese air force would not be the recipients (ie, complete Soviet units would be lent), no post war planes of Soviet design have been known to be lent to any country, and jets

have been seen over China. On the other hand, it seems quite possible that a Chinese Communist air force could be achieved fairly rapidly.

Burgess delighted in pouring scorn on the gullibility of United States intelligence in Tokyo in buying and believing fabricated reports, as Burgess saw them, from the Kuomintang forces of Chiang Kai-shek about what was happening in mainland China. However, he was not alone in the Foreign Office in discounting the value of such sources.

In May, 1951, Burgess defected to Russia with his friend and fellow spy, Mr Donald Maclean. He died in Moscow in 1963.



The maisonette where three of a family of five died.

Father and daughters die in London maisonette fire

Two children and their father died in a fire at their home in London early yesterday as their mother and elder sister watched helplessly from the street.

The dead were Mr Gordon Richards, aged 36, and his daughters Donna, aged six and Tammy, aged three. Mrs Jean Richards was walking the family dog when the fire broke out in their maisonette in Grosvenor Avenue, Islington.

Her eldest daughter Susan, aged 15, rushed out when the fire started. She and her mother stood in the street shouting to the family to get out.

Mr Alfred Woolley, who lives in the next door maisonette in the block of Greater London Council flats, said: "The first I knew about the fire was when I heard the sound of breaking glass and the woman screaming at her family from the road."

"She was shouting that the flat was on fire and to get out. But by then there was nothing they could do."

As the fire swept through the ground and first-floor maisonettes three railway workers passing by ran to an upstairs maisonette to evacuate a mother and her two young children who were asleep.

Police break up gypsies' bare-knuckle prize fight before crowd of 600

From Our Correspondent
Cambridge

Bare-knuckle prize fighting has returned secretly to Britain, according to Chief Supt Bernard Hosson, head of Cambridge city police.

After police yesterday broke up a crowd of 600 gypsies and travelling folk who had poured into Cambridge to watch an illegal bare-knuckle contest, Mr Hosson said: "There have been reports from other parts of the country where trouble has broken out after contests for money have been staged."

Similar contests had taken place in Essex and Yorkshire. Police arrived in Fen Road, Chesterton, as best of up to 5,000 gypsies began to leave the muddy lane blocked by hundreds of cars which included Rolls-Royces, Mercedes, and Jaguars. Many men were perched in trees seeking a grandstand view of the fight, which was about to begin.

Chief Inspector Steven Stafford arrived with six uniformed men to investigate the mass of men and vehicles in the lane, where many itinerants live.

He said: "I have never seen anything like it in my 25 years' service. There were gypsies and travellers from all over the country in new and expensive cars blocking the road and side bets of £1,000 were being laid."

"It could have been a very nasty situation, for whichever man won there would have been trouble from the losers with all that money involved."

"By the time we had forced our way to the centre of the lane the fighters had gone. Our aim was to prevent trouble, and I gave the crowd 20 minutes to disperse. Many were very nasty because they had travelled so far and there was a lot of haggling over bets which had been laid."

"But to our astonishment there was a mass exodus of angry men in beautiful cars and they had all gone before reinforcements arrived."

The fight was due to start as the police arrived. "There was no sign of a ring. I gathered that the men would form a human ring around the fighters", Mr Stafford said.

School meal said to be worse than workhouse's

Children in Blackburn are being served worse meals at school than those eaten by workhouse vagrants 50 years ago, Mr Jack Straw, Labour MP for Blackburn, said yesterday.

He plans to raise the matter in the Commons and protest personally to Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science.

Mr Straw said the menu for Blackburn's primary school children last Thursday was one sausage, two slices of bread, a cornflake cake and a glass of water.

The workhouse menu in Blackburn 50 years ago was: bread, 8oz; cooked or tinned meat, 2oz; cheese, 2oz; hot potatoes, 4oz; fruit.

Mr Michael Fitzherbert, chairman of Lancashire County Council's education committee, said last night that the children paid 40p a day for a "nutritionally balanced snack of two light courses".

"The children like the snacks and there is no waste," he said. "Primary responsibility for feeding the children rested with parents."

The library that helps and comforts MPs

By a Staff Reporter

The complex organisation and specialist services of that unique institution, the House of Commons Library, are described in a recently published book by Mr Dermot Englefield, the deputy librarian.

Mr Englefield says his book, *Parliament and Information*, describes the enormous changes that have taken place at the heart of the nation's information network in recent years.

It discusses the unique quality of the Commons Library, the only place a member of Parliament can go for confidential information from increasingly specialist staff who have no axe to grind.

The library, Mr Englefield adds, is "comfortable to write in, to read in, to research in, to rest in; above all, except during very restricted hours, it is private to members who are beyond the reach of the outside world".

It is almost always open, staffed and organized to work to the level required and to tight deadlines. Mr Englefield says it provides a personal and confidential service so that members need not reveal their hand to civil servants or to their parties.

The computer revolution arrived at Westminster with the launch a few weeks ago of a development plan.

Mr Englefield also looks at the way Parliament is reported to the outside world. Despite the introduction of parliamentary broadcasting, he writes, the portrait of Parliament, whether factual or impressionistic, that comes from the professional journalist will continue to be the most usual picture of the elected seen by the electorate.

Then came the second shock. When the Chief Clerk, Mr Burgomaster, named four new senators for election by the parliament and they were re-

WEST EUROPE

Frankfurt protest over El Salvador terror ends in mass violence

From Gretel Spitzer
Berlin, Feb 1

A protest demonstration in Frankfurt against "the terror of the military regime in El Salvador" supported by the United States got completely out of hand yesterday.

Instead of the 2,000 demonstrators expected by police, some 20,000 West Germans, Latin Americans, Turks and other foreign nationals marched through the city. Many leather-jacketed demonstrators wore crash helmets and masks.

A group of about 80 people broke away from the main demonstration, smashed shop windows, attacked banks and slashed the tyres of cars with American licence plates. Fireworks, were thrown at policemen and police cars daubed with dye and a shop was set on fire.

The damage was estimated at over a million marks (over £200,000). Five young demonstrators were detained and three policemen injured.

The demonstration, organized by the "El Salvador Solidarity Movement" and urged by the opposition of that country in West Germany, was supported by various left-wing and church groups.

Placards carried by the demonstrators demanded that the Americans should get out of El Salvador and urged national protest against "the murder of the people" by the junta.

Herr Karsten Voigt, an SPD deputy and former leader of the Young Social Democrats, was angry by the riots, but he appealed to the Roman Catholic Church and all West German Christians to show solidarity

with the people in El Salvador. He urged President Reagan and his Administration to open a dialogue with the opposition in El Salvador.

In West Berlin, the police were on full alert today after three successive nights of violence. Some 150 shops, banks and other buildings were damaged in the riots in the course of which 57 people were arrested. Damage was estimated at over two million marks (nearly £500,000).

The riots were in protest at the lack of cheap housing in the city, and the 14-month sentence on a student jailed for his part in last December's squatter riots.

There has been widespread support for the squatters in view of the city's housing policy, but they are strongly criticized for their violence.

Because of the unsolicited backing of radical elements, the squatters changed their tactics last week. Instead of launching large demonstrations, small groups start trouble in various districts of the city, only to disappear quickly when police arrive, and then resume their protest elsewhere.

To prevent the gathering of such protest groups before they can start smashing windows and damaging property, the number of police patrols, both plain-clothes and uniformed, is to be increased.

Discussions among politicians, church representatives and civic groups on how to get the situation under control continued throughout the weekend. Appeals to squatters not to resort to violence have yet to be heeded but after three nights of violence hopes are not too high.

Opposition sees road to power

Bonn coalition fights for survival in Berlin

From Patricia Clough
Bonn, Feb 1

West German politicians are preparing for a battle in West Berlin the outcome of which could decide the future of the Bonn Government.

The city elections, demanded by a large proportion of West Berliners in the wake of recent political upheavals, will severely test the Social Democrat-Free Democrat coalition which rules both in the city and in Bonn.

A defeat for the coalition in Berlin on May 10 could turn the malaise which has been afflicting the 11-year-old partnership since last October's Bundestag elections into a terminal disease. A victory for the Christian Democrats would be seen as the first big step on the road back to power.

For West Germans, Berlin is not just another big city. Both emotionally and politically the former capital, divided, isolated and dependent on East-West treaties and goodwill, its two million inhabitants are potential hostages to Moscow, is of great importance. For the two parties whose *Ostpolitik* made its existence more secure and its life easier, the loss of Berlin to the Opposition would be a big blow.

The trouble which set off the call for elections was hardly worthy of the city's status. The Social Democrat Party (SPD) has run the city with only one brief interruption since 1946 and scandals, patronage and malapropos have become an integral part of Berlin political life.

The last straw was a scandal which broke after the Senate, the city Government, guaranteed 90 per cent of a huge loan to the city's bank to a West Berlin building company, Bautechnik.

The company, having lost a huge sum in the Middle East, went into liquidation and the city will somehow have to find DM110m (£22.7m). Four senators resigned and a Senate committee is now investigating.

The inquiry will take seven months and the results will probably not come out before the elections.

Then came the second shock. When the Chief Clerk, Mr Burgomaster, named four new senators for election by the parliament and they were re-



Dr. Vogel: Outstanding politician.

jected. Deputies from the coalition camp had used the secret vote to torpedo their own people. Shattered, Herr Stobbe resigned.

Seizing their opportunity, the Christian Democrats started lecturing signatures to petition referendum for new elections. The avalanche of signatures several times the minimum 80,000 required, showed the Berliners wanted to voice the opinion. Soon the coalition parties realized that election had to come and without waiting for the referendum the fixed the date for May 10.

Meanwhile, the SPD tried to save the situation. Clear drastic steps were necessary. They even considered sending Herr Willy Brandt, former Chancellor and now party chairman, back to his old job: Chief Burgomaster.

Finally Herr Helmut Schmidt the Chancellor sent Dr. Han Jochen Vogel, his most valued minister and most likely successor, to the rescue. His acceptance by the Berlin parliament put the crisis on ice for the moment.

Dr Vogel is not only an outstanding politician but also one of the best city administrators having been a young and successful mayor of Munich. If any one can save Berlin for the SPD, he can. But if he fails not only his career but He Schmidt's prestige will suffer badly.

Swiss youths go on rampage in two cities

Zurich, Feb 1—Young Swiss demonstrators have clashed with police in fresh disturbances here and in Basle in which rubber bullets and water cannon were used.

Yesterday's clashes in Zurich, the scene of youth riots over the past nine months, occurred during an unauthorized demonstration outside the National Museum in protest at the seizure of an anti-establishment news sheet.

At least four demonstrators were taken to hospital with injuries. Police made 19 arrests. In Basle, police arrested 13 people in clashes at the end of a week-long series of public meetings organized by a local theatre on the theme "disorders in the state".

Young demonstrators broke up a discussion late on Friday night by throwing eggs, paint and firecrackers, and then went on a rampage through the city centre, police said.

The disturbances began in Zurich last May, with demands for more local authority grants for youth culture. The troubles have since spread to other Swiss cities.—Reuter.

Brazil signs up £400m worth of French skills

From Our Own Correspondent
Paris, Feb 1

President Figueiredo's Brazil ended a five-day official visit to France today with his almost become a tradition for visiting heads of state: a trip to a nuclear power state.

Nuclear technology was the chief theme of the visit, although it did not specifically feature in the 10 agreements worth a total of 4,500 francs (£409m) which were signed.

These relate to the construction of a new nuclear power station, a gas plant, two chemical transport ships, town transport and a nationwide radar system for Brazil.

Cooperation between the two countries will concentrate on oil technology research and more importantly on oil substitutes. Prospects of oil service in the metropolitan areas were said to be "favourable" and there could be further French technology available for railway systems and irrigation.

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WEST EUROPE

Communists plead for new union of left to defeat M Giscard

From Ian Murray

Paris, Feb 1

M Georges Marchais, leader of the French Communist Party, has made it quite clear that he expects government posts to be given to his party should the Socialists win the presidential elections.

Speaking in Bordeaux yesterday and in Paris on Friday evening, to large party rallies, he said that Communist ministers were essential if there was to be a real and dynamic change in the way France was run.

In Bordeaux he made a long and detailed attack on the policies of President Giscard d'Estaing during his term in office. "As far as I am concerned, everything is clear," he said. "I want, along with my party, to create the conditions in which to beat Giscard d'Estaing."

To do this he called for "the union of all the popular forces, the union of the left for change". Rediscovery of the phrase "union of the left" by M Marchais after his many bitter attacks against the Socialist Party over the past three years, shows how far he has come down the path of reconciliation as the elections loom.

Nevertheless he is still

strongly critical of M François Mitterrand, the Socialist candidate. In his Paris speech he was particularly scathing of the way in which he believed Mitterrand was seeking to avoid a commitment to create Communist ministers. If the Socialist candidate pretended to talk of change without mentioning the Communists, he was making a mockery of the idea, he said.

M Marchais, while never having abandoned the idea of the union of the left in his public utterances, has until recently refused to accept that the Socialist Party leaders could ever bring about the kind of changes wanted by the Communists. Now he seems to be helping from their Communist friends they could still create the conditions for change.

M Michel Poniatowski, the president of the Republican Party and a close adviser of President Giscard d'Estaing, has sarcastically sent a copy of the French constitution to the Socialist Party to remind its leaders, as he put it, that the Communist Party was opposed to it.

Mitterrand, who is away in China, has not yet responded to the latest taunts aimed at him.

Dramatic journey for Spanish King

Delay over choice of Suárez successor

From Richard Wigg

Madrid, Feb 1

Large posters in Madrid streets are advertising a new book on King Juan Carlos, who later this week undertakes one of the most dramatic journeys of his reign—a visit to the troubled Basque region.

Emilio "Ever" Inch a King", the book charts the first five years of his reign and the transition to democracy executed by the man whom the King chose so successfully for the task. Señor Adolfo Suárez, who suddenly resigned office on Thursday.

The King spent the weekend in consultations with parliamentary leaders trying to fulfil probably the most crucial political function that the democratic constitution accorded him—selecting a candidate for the prime ministership. The royal choice, when made, requires parliamentary approval.

The serious, continuing divisions within the biggest party, the Centre Democratic Union (UCD), will make the King's task of choosing a new Prime Minister all the more difficult.

Because of these divisions, the King is not expected to nominate any politician before he goes to the Basque region on Tuesday.

Security risks, he will be accompanied by Queen Sophia and possibly Prince Felipe on the tour.

A second round of consultations may come when the King returns, but General Suárez will be in charge of economic affairs, still the most likely successor to Señor Suárez.

Señor Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of economic affairs, is still the most likely successor to Señor Suárez.

Señor Calvo Sotelo had consultations this weekend with both his supporters in the party and with General Suárez.

Christian Democrat and liberal parliamentary wings who had not been consulted by Señor Suárez over the succession.

King Juan Carlos: consultations to find a prime minister.

Prisoners win transfer after revolt

Genoa, Feb 1—A prison revolt ended peacefully today when six guards held hostage for hours at knifepoint were set free after authorities agreed to transfer five prisoners to another jail.

Police said one of the guards seized by a group of 15 prisoners this morning had a dislocated shoulder but the rest were unhurt.

Five men who led the revolt in the remand section of Marassi jail called it off when a local magistrate accepted their demand to be transferred immediately to another prison.

Four were members of a gang facing trial for the murder in Genoa in 1977 of a policeman.

Community industry and budget changes proposed

By David Wood

Two pamphlets are published today by Conservative members of the European Parliament proposing reforms to the European Community, perhaps partly with an eye on Britain's presidency of the Council of Ministers from July to December.

Mr Robert Jackson, MEP for Upper Thames, goes beyond reform of the common agricultural policy to the promotion of new spending policies. He argues that Britain can prove its case for budgetary fairness only by supporting budgetary convergence "designed deliberately to bring about resource transfers from richer to poorer regions".

Inherent in his logic is the British membership of the European monetary system. He is against further special arbitrary arrangements of the kind made

Fishing warning to EEC as fleets leave

Bilbao, Feb 1—Fishing fleets from northern Spain and the Canary Islands headed for their home ports today after agreements expired with the EEC and Morocco.

Nearly 675 boats were affected, 415 from the north and 260 from the Canaries.

A spokesman for the northern fleet said that fishermen there might abandon their peaceful attitude, if the EEC does not grant them more fishing licences than the 168 they were given last year.

He hoped a new agreement would be announced at a meeting of the EEC Council of Ministers on February 10.

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Community industry and budget changes proposed

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Inherent in his logic is the British membership of the European monetary system. He is against further special arbitrary arrangements of the kind made

by the EEC under pressure from Mrs Thatcher last year.

Sir David Nicholson, MEP for London Centre, has led a working party of European Democrats who report on developing a Community industrial policy. They argue for an industrial development fund within the European budget, alongside the regional and social funds, and propose that the Council of Ministers should include an industrial council and that there should be an industrial committee created in the European Parliament.

By a coherent industrial policy, the report suggests that the present domination of the budget by agriculture could be corrected.

The European Budget by Robert Jackson, Conservative Political Centre, £1.50.

Report on Industrial Policy, European Democratic Group.

OVERSEAS

Bani-Sadr criticism of clergy increases

From Tony Allaway

Tehran, Feb 1

President Bani-Sadr of Iran this weekend launched a new phase in his unceasing war of words with the country's ruling powers.

In a speech in the southern town of Jiroft the President openly called for public support against the religious fundamentalists controlling the political apparatus, accusing his foes of "oppression and despotism".

In a newspaper interview published today he also accused parliament of attempting to eliminate every trace of the President from national life.

The President's new verbal onslaught coincides with the so far unconfirmed reports from political sources that Mr Bani-Sadr has spurned attempts at compromise with his declared enemies in the powerful Islamic Republican Party (IRP). Instead, the sources said the President is attempting to gather the support of as many other political groups as he can in his battle against the IRP.

The sources suggest that one reason for the President's latest onslaught might be elections expected to take place in the near future for some of the remaining parliamentary seats not decided in last spring's elections.

Certainly he was at his most outspoken in his speech in Jiroft which was reported by some of the Iranian press including, surprisingly, the official Parva news agency.

"I will resist tendencies towards oppression, towards pressure, towards prison and towards torture," he told a crowd in the main square of the town, where he had gone to examine the plight of war refugees resettled there.

The exact nature of the pledge that Mrs Thatcher gave last summer to Mr Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister, on his plans for constitutional reform, is expected to arouse heated discussion in the Canadian House of Commons this week.

Mr Jake Epp, a Conservative Opposition critic, said this weekend that he has written information that Mr Trudeau has not told the full story "about his discussions in Downing Street on June 25 last".

Mr Trudeau has said repeatedly that the British Prime Minister promised to put on a three-line whip to push legislation through the British House to amend the British North America (BNA) Act in accordance with a request from Canada's Parliament.

Mrs Thatcher has never confirmed or denied the Canadian Prime Minister's version of the discussion. Meanwhile the question has become a politically explosive one because of confusion and doubt over whether Mrs Thatcher was made fully aware of what she was being asked to commit herself to.

Specifically, it is not at all clear that she knew the Westminster would be asked to enact a Canadian charter of rights

before surrendering control over the BNA Act, still the basis of Canada's constitution.

The rights charter has become the most highly contentious part of the Canadian "patriation" resolution, which is opposed by eight of Canada's 10 provinces.

It is also unclear whether Mr Trudeau advised Mrs Thatcher that the British Government would not support the support of the provinces.

When he emerged from his June meeting with Mrs Thatcher, however, Mr Trudeau told reporters that the "hypothesis" of provincial opposition had not come up.

Asked by a reporter on Friday to explain the apparent contradiction Mr Trudeau replied: "Well, you really have me there... If I said it, it must have been with tongue in cheek, and I honestly would want to see the transcript of that, if there is any."

Mr Epp, the principal Tory constitutional critic, said his information indicated that Mr Trudeau "has not given Canadians the full import of his discussions with Mrs Thatcher". He intended to question the

Prime Minister about the matter in the Commons tomorrow.

The federal constitutional plan was dealt a potentially crippling blow last week with the report of a British parliamentary committee which suggested that Westminster should not pass it in its present form and with so many provinces—six of the ten—opposed to it.

At his press conference, an extraordinary affair, Mr Trudeau said the committee, headed by Sir Anthony Kershaw, and the British Parliament "have no business deciding what is good for Canada".

"Interference by Mr Kershaw is, in the final analysis, interference by Britain," he said.

At another point he remarked that it would be funny for Britain to remain in the Commonwealth "and to have refused to give complete and final independence to one of its former colonies when that has been requested".

The British might find it difficult to justify their position when Commonwealth heads of government met in Melbourne this autumn.

"If they (the British) are wise," he added, "they will get it through quickly and hold their nose while they are doing it and send it over."

Labour pledges: Mr Shimon Peres, the Israeli Opposition leader, said today that if he were elected prime minister, he would "definitely not be obliged to follow the policies of Mr Menachem Begin—particularly regarding Jewish settlements on occupied Arab lands (UPI writes from Tel Aviv)."

But Mr Peres said Israel was united regardless of political preference on the issue of Jerusalem. He called for the construction of 50,000 apartments to strengthen the Jewish population in the united capital of Israel. He did not elaborate where the housing would be built.

Addressing delegates of his Labour Party, Mr Peres said under his rule, Israel would honour all its international treaties, such as its peace treaty with Egypt. But domestic policies were another matter, and settlements fell into this category just as did economic policy.

Labour's optimism about the elections in the summer is reflected in public opinion polls. In a poll published last Friday the newspaper *Maurio* found Mr Likud grouping slipped another 2 points to 14 per cent, and Labour's standing rose 2 per cent to 44 per cent.

The staff officer for education published warnings that the strike would be illegal. The authorities cracked down when a three-week vacation ended and the teachers failed to return to work.

Reflecting the deep concern of the Soviet leadership—and indeed of most Russians—that the Polish crisis might have to be paid for from the pockets of Soviet workers, *Izvestia* spoke of an "escalation of tension and deepening of chaos" in the economy, which was preventing a return to a normal rhythm of life.

All this was costing billions of zlotys, thousands of tons of uncast steel and unmined coal and tens of thousands of pairs of unmade shoes, *Izvestia* said.

Echoing similar ominous assertions in December, denied at the time by the Polish leadership—*Izvestia* reported that workers were being intimidated by some brigade of Solidarity to ensure cooperation in strikes.

The report is the toughest attack yet on the union and the most gloomy picture yet given to the Russians of the situation in Poland. It is seen both by Russians and by western observers here as a sign that Moscow has reached the limits of tolerance.

Though there is no suggestion that the Russians are now ready to blame Mr Stanislaw Kania, the party leader, who still appears to enjoy the Kremlin's confidence, it is clear that they are expecting the Polish authorities to take, fairly swiftly, more decisive action.

Tass reported the announcement that action would be taken against those who illegally seized factories to press their demands. The Russians emphasised on such a crack-down indicates that Moscow has probably been pressing Warsaw for a tougher stance towards the strikers.

In exchange for the birds, regarded as the most significant artifacts in the new nation's heritage, the South Africans have received an outstanding collection of insects.

The transaction concluded months of secret negotiations between Zimbabwe's National Museums and Monuments Department and the South



A supporter of Ayatollah Khomeini who says she is willing to die for him.

"I call on the nation for support and assure you that such steadfastness will pave the way to a happy future."

The President told the people to fear nothing "if you do not want to be ruled by those who want to bring back the bad days of the past through trickery, calumny, libel, prison and torture."

In an interview with the newspaper *Islamic Revolution* published today the President also declared that the IRP-dominated Majlis (parliament) "has had no other purpose

except to eliminate the President... Wherever they see a trace of the President they try to eliminate it... The problem is that the constitution has not been implemented from the beginning."

Despite the admission of some of his aides that the recent Iranian counter-offensive had come to virtually nothing, the President said Iran was now in the process of launching a "third phase" of its struggle with Iraq. He did not specify what this involved beyond saying it meant using "the full

employment of resources: we have for crushing the enemy".

Diplomatic break: Iran has broken diplomatic relations with Jordan and Morocco, the state radio announced (Reuters writes from Tehran). It said that the break had been approved at a four-hour Cabinet meeting by an overwhelming majority.

Mr Behzad Nabavi, Executive Affairs Minister, told the radio the move was made "because of the two countries' full support for the Iraqi regime and their enmity to the Islamic revolution of Iran".

France has delivered, on time, the first four Mirage F1 fighters to Iraq out of a total order for 60. The aircraft, which were ordered in 1977, were handed over to Iraqi pilots in Cyprus yesterday.

The four jets were flown to Iraq by the French Air Force. The Iranian Embassy in Paris said: "The Iranian people will never forget this act by the French Government."

According to a statement from the French Foreign Ministry, the Government had always made it clear that it would execute the orders laid down at the time they were placed.

Iraq, which has become France's second largest oil supplier, is also one of its best customers for arms. Apart from the Mirage fighters, the Iraqis were started last year for supplying 150 Alphajet trainers as well as for a number of ships including corvettes, fast launches and coastal batteries.

The Iraqi Army is already equipped with 100 AMX 30 tanks, 50 light AMX 10 tanks as well as 40 Puma helicopters and 60 Gazelle 342 anti-tank helicopters. Other French equipment in service includes a range of missiles and anti-tank weapons.

Since the start of the Gulf war France had not delivered any military equipment to Iraq. The Mirages appear to have been regarded as a special case since they were ordered well before the start of the war and presumably have been paid for.

The four jets were flown to Cyprus and handed over to Iraqi pilots who had arrived three days earlier on board a Jordanian flight. The Cyprus Government initially said that it believed the aircraft had been delivered to Jordan.

Peru ends decree law as troops take border post

Lima, Feb 1. (AFP)—President Fernando Belaúnde Terry of Peru announced here late today that a proclamation of a state of emergency had been lifted after the "victory" of his country's troops in border clashes with Ecuador.

He cancelled the emergency decree after it was learnt that an outpost at Paquisha, which had been occupied by Ecuador, had been retaken by Peruvian troops.

Earlier President Belaúnde had said that his country would accept a ceasefire in its border conflict with Ecuador as soon as Peru had captured the final outpost occupied by Ecuador on Peruvian territory. Agency France-Press and AP.

South Africa sends back Zimbabwe's symbolic stone birds

From Stephen Taylor

Salisbury, Feb 1

In a cultural exchange rich in irony, South Africa has returned to Zimbabwe a collection of five stone birds that were removed from the Great Zimbabwe ruins in the nineteenth century by an archaeologist working on the orders of Cecil John Rhodes.

In exchange for the birds, regarded as the most significant artifacts in the new nation's heritage, the South Africans have received an outstanding collection of insects.

The transaction concluded months of secret negotiations between Zimbabwe's National Museums and Monuments Department and the South

African Museum in Cape Town and coincided with a period of particularly poor relations between Salisbury and Pretoria after the South African raid into Mozambique last week.

The birds are among a group of eight that were originally found in an east-side enclosure of the acropolis at the ruins in 1891 by James Theodore Bent, an archaeologist-explorer who had been dispatched to the site by Rhodes and the Royal Geographical Society.

Fearing that others would soon follow him, Bent hid his booty, including the birds, gold and pottery, in a cave nearby by which he could arrange for it to be transported to Cape Town.

At the time of the exchange, five of the birds were in the

South African Museum, one was at the National Museum in Bulawayo, one at Rhodes's old house in Cape Town, and half each at museums in Berlin and Salisbury.

The single complete bird in Zimbabwe has been adopted as the symbol of the new nation and is represented on its flag and currency.

The birds, carved from soapstone, range between 20 and 30 cms in height. Archaeologists argue over whether the birds are fish eagles, black eagles or bat-eagles but agree that they date from the height of the Zimbabwean civilization, about 1400.

Bent apparently believed that the birds were of Persian or even Phoenician origin. While

authorities again cannot agree on their origin, it has been suggested that the birds represented African rulers at Zimbabwe through whose spirits prayers to the god Mwari were offered.

The possibility of bringing the birds back to roost in Zimbabwe was raised by a black MP in the short-lived Muzorewa Government about 18 months ago.

The ruins at Great Zimbabwe had a considerable importance for black nationalist leaders as they contradicted the assertions of Rhodesian Front politicians that blacks were incapable of producing a civilisation. But Mr Desmond Jackson, executive director of the museum department, said tonight: "We

Black African leaders denounce commando attack on Mozambique

From Nicholas Ashford

Johannesburg, Feb 1

One of the two South African soldiers killed during the commando raids on African Nationalist Congress (ANC) hideouts in Maputo last Friday was of British origin. It has been revealed here. He was Sergeant Robert Hutchinson, whose parents live in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

The other dead South African was named as Sergeant Ian Sutill.

Altogether 14 people were killed during the South African attack on three houses in the Maputo suburb of Matola during the early hours of Friday morning. They included 11 occupants of the ANC houses, the two South African soldiers and a Portuguese civilian who was caught in the crossfire.

One of the ANC dead is reported to be Mr William Khanyile, a former Robben Island prisoner and a one-time senior member of the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

The raid, the first of its kind by South Africa against a target in Mozambique, has received widespread condemnation in neighbouring states as it is seen as a signal that South Africa may be embarking on an aggressive new policy in dealing with the ANC.

Lieutenant-General Armando Guebuza, Mozambique's Deputy Defence Minister, said the attack was "a foul and criminal act". He told a Fretilim party conference that it was a challenge to Mozambique's right to shelter South African citizens "being persecuted by the apartheid regime".

In Salisbury, Mr Robert Mugabe, the Prime Minister, said in a message to President Samora Machel of Mozambique that "these wanton acts of murder and aggression by the brazen gangs of the Pretoria regime" would not deter Africa from assisting the people of South Africa and Namibia to attain their freedom.

The raid was also condemned by Chief Gashu Buthelesi, the Chief Minister of Kwazulu and president of the Inkatha movement, the largest black organisation in South Africa. Addressing an Inkatha rally in Soweto he said that such actions would only drive more South African

blacks into violent opposition against the Government.

However, the two main white opposition parties in South Africa have both supported the raid. Mr Harry Schwarz, defence spokesman for the opposition Progressive Federal Party, said that terrorists should be hit wherever they were. He added, however, that caution should be expected not to disturb the peaceful border between South Africa and Mozambique.

Meanwhile, South Africa has denied claims by the Mozambican authorities—and supported by diplomats who visited the scene of the raid—that some of the dead ANC members had had their ears cut off—a practice that became widespread during the war in Rhodesia. The allegations were "ridiculous and scandalous propaganda", a spokesman said.

Last night, the Defence Ministry put on display a consignment of Russian arms and ammunition to show, it was said, that the raid had been against an ANC headquarters and not against refugee homes as had been claimed by Mozambique.

The weapons included small arms, rockets, mortar and limpet mines similar to those used during last year's ANC attack against the Sasol oil-from-coal plant.

Attack denounced: The African National Congress today condemned the South African raid as "a criminal act of banditry" (Reuters writes from Lusaka).

A statement signed by Mr Alfred Nzo, ANC's Secretary-General, and issued in Lusaka said the attack was "a continuation of the barbarous policy of the apartheid regime which has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people in Mozambique, Zambia and Angola, as well as South Africa."

"This policy of mass murder once more confirms the criminal nature of the apartheid regime whose continued existence constitutes a challenge both to our people and the rest of democratic and peace-loving mankind," the statement said.

It added that the situation of Mozambique "is a part of a policy which is aimed at destabilizing the independent states of our region and overthrowing the legitimate governments of these countries."

strongly supported by a still confidential analysis of the sources of South Africa's crude oil imports which is to be published later this year by the American-based Shipping Research Bureau.

Since the beginning of 1979, when the new Iranian Government (previously the source of 90 per cent of South Africa's crude) cut off supplies, all Arab and African oil exporting countries have operated an oil embargo against South Africa.

A declaration issued by more than 40 MPs from 11 European countries said there was "alarming evidence" that Western companies were "purchasing oil from various countries including those that embargo South Africa, and then secretly taking it directly or indirectly to South Africa."

The accusation was levelled at the end of a two-day "conference of West European parliamentarians on an oil embargo against South Africa" organised by the United Nations special committee against apartheid.

The parliamentarians called on the United Nations Security Council to impose a mandatory oil embargo against South Africa, which has no indigenous oil resources, in line with resolutions passed by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly voted in 1979, and again in 1980, for an oil embargo, but the seven countries which voted against included Britain, France and the United States. As permanent members of the Security Council, all three have the power of veto.

Outlining the conclusions of the conference for journalists, Mr Laurens Brinkhorst, a Dutch opposition politician belonging to the left-of-centre Democrats 66 group, described an oil embargo as "one of the last peaceful means of putting an end to apartheid."

South Africa has built up large strategic stockpiles of crude oil, kept mainly in disused coal mines in the Transvaal, and can meet around 20 per cent of its oil needs from its oil-from-coal plants.

Studies done for the United Nations suggest that a totally effective oil embargo could bring the South African economy to a grinding halt within two-and-a-half years.

The parliamentarians' accusations against Western oil and shipping companies were

had been interested in such a project for some time. It was illogical that not one of the birds could be seen at Great Zimbabwe.

But when the matter was raised in the House of Assembly the department discreetly put the word round that it felt negotiations would be better handled by experts. "If politicians had intruded it would have scotched the deal," Mr Jackson said.

The collection of Hymenoptera which has gone to South Africa was started in the 1920s by George Arnold, director of Bulawayo's National Museum, and has been close to completion since.

It consists of more than 30,000 specimens.

OVERSEAS

Prisoners of conscience



Taiwan: Li Ching-sun

By Caroline Moorehead

Li Ching-sun, a former deputy director of the state-owned national radio and chairman of the executive council of the Great China Evening News, is serving a 15-year sentence in a prison off the south-eastern coast of Taiwan.

At his military court trial under martial law legislation in December, 1971, he was charged with sedition.

Li Ching-sun—also known as Li Jinhuan—spent a period of his journalistic career as editor of the *Central Daily News*, the ruling party of Taiwan. He is believed to have been a long-standing party member.

After his arrest in November, 1970, Li Ching-sun was accused of belonging to the Chinese Communist Party, passing government secrets to the Chinese Communists and attempting to foment a revolt in Taiwan.

None of these charges, however, referred to anything taking place after 1949, when the Kuomintang Government left mainland China for Taiwan. Li Ching-sun himself was born on the mainland and moved to Taiwan that year.

According to recent information, Li Ching-sun suffers from diabetes and low blood pressure. Since his trial he has said that he confessed to the charges against him only under duress.

The true reason for his imprisonment, it would seem, is that he had in the past written articles criticizing the Government for inefficiency and corruption.

Peking to stop backing Asean communist insurgent movements

From David Watts

Bangkok, Feb 1

Mr Zhao Ziyang, the Chinese Prime Minister, today indicated important developments after two sessions of "very fruitful" talks with General Prem Tinsulanonda, his Thai counterpart.

At a press conference, Mr Zhao hinted that there had been progress towards the unification of resistance movements fighting the Vietnamese in Kampuchea and said that China was ending its material support to communist insurgent movements in the countries of South-East Asia.

The Chinese and the Thais have for some time been pressing for the unification of the military arm of the Government of Democratic Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge, and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF), the leading non-communist resistance group.

The Chinese have said that there would be no substantial support for the KPNLF, headed by Mr Son Sann, a former Prime Minister of Kampuchea, until there was cooperation between this group and the Khmer Rouge. But Mr Son Sann has consistently rejected the idea of union between the two groups, though he favours occasional military cooperation.

"I am optimistic about the unification of all patriotic resistance forces in Kampuchea," Mr Zhao remarked, indicating that there had been progress over Chinese plans for a unified military front against the Vietnamese in Kampuchea.

This is a principal element of China's Kampuchea policy in line with the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean). Both the Chinese and Asean want either Mr Son Sann or Prince Norodom Sihanouk to lead the unified movement, to give its respectability, while harnessing the military strength of the Khmer Rouge—the only credible military opponents of the Vietnamese—to the joint effort.

Mr Zhao said that if there was a further incursion by the Vietnamese into Thailand, "the Government and people of China would stand firmly beside the people of Thailand and find some means of coming to their aid."

Throughout his Bangkok visit the Chinese leader emphasized Chinese support for Thailand, and for Asean's call for an international conference on Kampuchea.

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Widespread unrest reported in China

From David Lan

of Agence France-Presse

Hongkong, Feb 1

Recent reports from China have revealed signs of widespread unrest which, if unchecked, could lead to political instability, disrupting the country's modernization programme.

An analysis of the Chinese media shows that the unrest has taken several forms including publications, posters, leaflets with slogans, demonstrations, occasional explosions and even agitation for another cultural revolution.

Among those involved are intellectuals who have been returned to the countryside or have returned from there to the cities, remnant followers of the disgraced Gang of Four, and various minorities.

The areas affected, as mentioned in reports, include Xinjiang in the west, Tibet and Yunnan in the south-west, Shanghai in the east and Jilin in the north-east.

The party theoretical journal, *Red Flag*, yesterday stated: "In our country, there is a class struggle and factors of instability, so we must not let up on our vigilance."

Describing the recent Peking trial of the Gang of Four and their associates as "a victory over the legal system," the journal called for the use of the law to attack "all enemies subverting stability and to firmly shatter remnant forces of the Lin Biao-Jiang Qing cliques."

The *Peking Daily* said yesterday: "A pessimistic wave of sabotage, protests and despair has been sweeping the country." If unchecked, "it is bound to ruin our hard-earned political stability."

A Shanghai paper reported last week that remnant followers of the Gang of Four were running illegal cells and publications under the cover of "democracy." Some of them hoped to use methods of the Cultural Revolution and stage a second revolution.

The *Liberation Daily* of Shanghai said: "There still exist factors of instability and they keep rising."

These are just a few of a series of articles speaking of the dangers to China's stability, against a background of unusual events across the country.

Most noticeable among these has been the movements of Mr Wang Zhaohua, a Politburo member who recently visited Shanghai and is now reported in Xinjiang, both of them places shimmering with unrest.

Reliable sources were quoted as saying that about 10,000 students had recently demonstrated in the centre of Shanghai, demanding legalisation of their status.

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The treasures of Pickfair go on the auction block



Pickfair, the Hollywood home of Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks Sr.

"I gently admonish all loved ones and friends that there be no 'weeping' over America's Sweetheart," declared America's Sweetheart Mary Pickford in her voluminous will. By the time she died in 1979 at the age of 86 there were few left to weep but many, it seems, to squabble over the spoils.

When the treasures of Pickfair, second only to the White House at one time as the most famous residence in America, go on sale on February 19 at the James Goodman Gallery in Glendale, California, there will be no sign of the complicated negotiations that have gone on since her death over the considerable assets she left behind.

In fact, it will be almost as fascinating an exercise to examine what will not go on the auction block as to see what will be there. For since her death there has been intrigue and infighting worthy of a Venetian court.

In her will the silent star, whose marriage to Douglas Fairbanks, sr, made them the most glamorous couple in the land, decreed that the proceeds of the sale of the 22 room converted hunting lodge, where everyone from Albert Einstein to European royalty, from mobster Bugsy Siegel to Charlie Chaplin were entertained, should go to the non-profit Mary Pickford Foundation.

The house was recently bought for \$5.4m (£2.2m) but for the past year lawyers for Miss Pickford's husband, 41 years, former band leader and actor Buddy Rogers have been negotiating with executors of the estate over what Mr Rogers, who is also a trustee, is entitled to claim from the house under the terms of the will, which stated he should receive such household furnishings as he may designate as necessary to properly furnish his home.

Trustees said they expected a modest house to be furnished—not the 7,500 square foot lodge that Mr Rogers has been building on land adjoining Pickfair.

Finally the court awarded Rogers \$1m to cash as his share in helping his wife sell—some 25 years ago—her interest in United Artists, the studio she founded with Fairbanks, D. W. Griffith and Chaplin in the twenties—as well as half of Pickfair's furnishings.

While all this was going on appraisers reported that one day two moving men arrived to remove pieces of furniture and when challenged said they were working for Mrs Rogers.

"But she's dead," an appraiser noted, later discovering that the "Mrs Rogers" referred to was a long time friend of Buddy Rogers.

Other precious items—including pieces from Pickfair's exquisite jade collection—were believed stolen and a valuable box load of six decorative guns given by



Buddy Rogers beside a portrait of his wife Mary Pickford as Betsy Ross, the seamstress of the first American flag.

Rudolf Valentino to Douglas Fairbanks, and willed to the Smithsonian Institute were sent from the house—but vanished on the way.

Miss Pickford's star sapphire, however was personally picked up by a representative of the Washington museum. Mr Rogers acquired the 100 piece Napoleon Josephine china dinner service—willed to him—the ten Frederic Remington paintings, and the famous Rodin drawings. Over the years there have been rumours about the authenticity of the artwork and executor Sull Lawrence notes, "We too doubt that the Remingtons are the genuine article and we believe the Rodins to be copies and of no great value."

Appraisers uncovered Miss Pickford's "honeymoon box"—containing her wedding dress, a kimono monogrammed with a brown teddy bear and a doll. Even more poignant were letters from Miss Pickford

to Fairbanks pleading with him not to divorce her and besmirch their image as America's perfect couple. Fairbanks did, however, in 1935 to marry Lady Sylvia Ashley.

Among the items to be offered are two solid gold carrier monogrammed vanity sets, old Chinese silk, oil paintings of the actress, Fairbanks costumes from the *The Mark of Zorro*, silver from Tiffany's, her film costumes, and photographs inscribed from all the Hollywood greats including a pre-mustache Clark Gable, and her flower style wedding dress.

There are still some 165 boxes from the estate trammed with articles which are being sifted through and as Mr Goodman the auctioneer, says, "This is the ultimate Hollywood house and I believe people will be buying as much for memory and legend as for investment."

Ivor Davis

Malaysia frees writer

From Our Correspondent

Kuala Lumpur, Feb 1

The Malaysian Government has announced the release from detention of Mr Samad Ismail, a journalist and writer, after holding him without trial for nearly five years.

Sources said he would be freed after a statement by him is broadcast tomorrow.

Mr Samad, whose literary works had earned him a secure niche in Malay literature, was detained in June 1976 for his alleged communist activities.

He was a close confidant of Tun Abdul Razak, a former Prime Minister, who died in

January 1976, and of several Cabinet ministers.

Shortly after he was detained in June 1976, Mr Samad appeared on television to confess his involvement with the underground communist movement since 1949.

Many of his friends then felt that his arrest was largely due to intrigues within the ruling political party but this has been repeatedly denied by Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, the Home Affairs Minister.

Mr Samad featured twice in *The Times* Prisoners of Conscience column, on July 12, 1976, and on June 16 last year.

Briton's body is found in hotel basement

Johore Baru, Malaysia, Feb 1

Malaysian police said today that the body of a British architect had been found in a septic tank in a Johore Baru hotel.

The body, which was suspected in the death of Douglas Hurst, aged 32, from Wimbledon, London.

A plumber found the body while checking a pump in the hotel's basement. Police said Mr Hurst checked into the hotel on January 19 and was reported missing five days later.

—Reuter.

Hongkong doubts unallayed over nationality law

From Our Correspondent

Hongkong, Feb 1

The British Government's assurance that the British Nationality Bill is not designed to weaken the links between Britain and Hongkong has not allayed doubts among expatriates and resident Chinese in the crown colony.

There was immediate popular and official support for the recommendation by Sir Paul Bryan, the chairman of the all-party Anglo-Hongkong group of MPs, that the passports of Hongkong citizens should carry the words "British (Hongkong) citizen" and that of inhabitants of the other dependent territories should similarly have the name of the country inserted.

Commentaries in the Hongkong United States claimed that the new legislation sought to make Hongkong residents "second-class citizens."

There is strong belief that Britain is steadily discarding the ties with Hongkong.

Summing up this public opinion, a leading article in *The Express*, the leading Chinese-language daily, said: "Although it is generally acknowledged that a close link between Hongkong and Britain is of mutual advantage, Whitehall to weaken the links between Britain and Hongkong has not allayed doubts among expatriates and resident Chinese in the crown colony."

There has been swift assurance from the United States consulate here to Hongkong students that the new controls on foreigners studying in the United States will not seriously affect them.

Under the controls, which will take effect from February 23, all foreign students will be permitted to remain in the States for only the length of time required to complete the approved course of study.

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British minister in cordial talks with Dr Obote

From Our Correspondent

Nairobi, Feb 1

Mr Richard Luce, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, met President Milton Obote, in Entebbe yesterday and discussed relations between Britain and Uganda in the light of the December elections which brought Dr Obote to power.

The talks were described as cordial. The Ugandans have asked for more British aid including military assistance to train the newly-recruited Ugandan Army, as well as a wide range of development and technical aid.

Mr Shafiq Arain, the newly-appointed Ugandan High Commissioner in London and the only Asian in Dr Obote's Cabinet, attended the talks.

The President and Mrs Obote later gave a lunch in honour of Mr Luce, which was also attended by Mr William Billie, the British High Commissioner, and by Sir David and Lady Scott.

Sir David, who was High Commissioner in Uganda from 1966 to 1969, has now retired from the diplomatic service and is visiting Uganda on behalf of Mitchell Corts, the firm that owns large tea estates there, and of Barclays Bank.

Sir David has been renewing acquaintance with Dr Obote, who was in office when he served in Uganda.

Mitchell Corts has been assured that the agreement to revive and rehabilitate its tea estates in Uganda will be honoured by the Obote Government. But the company is also anxious to revive trading and engineering businesses which were also seized in 1972 by former President Idi Amin as part of his "economic war".

Mr Luce is visiting Karamoja, in north-east Uganda, to see some of the work being done there to overcome a disastrous famine.

More famine is threatened in north-west Uganda, where an estimated 250,000 people fled from their homes in October after remnants of the Amin army invaded from neighbouring Zaïre and Sudan. Considerable damage was caused to Arua, the main town of the West Nile district and homes and farms were looted over a wide area.

Many people fled into Zaïre and Sudan and have now returned, to face starvation because the harvest has been lost. United Nations officials who visited the area last week say a substantial food aid is needed urgently.

On its part, the Uganda Government is trying to restore services in the West Nile, and some shops have reopened in Arua, which until recently was almost deserted.

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you can help others in need

This house in Northumberland has become too large for its owner. Rates and maintenance were heavy. Help the Aged's plan solved two problems—the owner's, and that of some retired people.

The owner has made the house available to Help the Aged and it will be used to provide accommodation for 20/25 retired people. There will be a resident warden and meals will be provided. The owner could have continued to live in the house or in one of the cottages on the estate, free of rates, maintenance and insurance costs for life and that of the surviving spouse, in return for making the property available to the Charity.

Help the Aged welcome enquiries from those who are willing to consider such a plan—which can usually be adapted to suit the owner's circumstances. Offers of land for building flats for old people are also appreciated.

An Extra Care Unit to perpetuate the name of someone dear to you and provide lasting help for the Frail and Elderly—£6,000 endows a unit in an existing Help the Aged project.

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Help the Aged, Room T2C,
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Term starts in March and October

Can the Taj Mahal be saved from ruin by pollution?

Count Keyserling in his *Travel Diary of a Philosopher* wrote that the Taj Mahal was one of the greatest works of art, it is perhaps the greatest of all pieces of artifice which the spirit of man has ever achieved. He also spoke of the "enamel-like quality" of the marble monument.

Since Keyserling wrote these lines in 1914, the enamel-like sheen of the marble has become the victim of the mindless

SPORT

Skiing

Stenmark puts on his later than late show

From John Hennessey
St. Anton, Feb. 1—Ingemar Stenmark of Sweden, pulled off a stunning World Cup slalom victory even by his own remarkable standards here today. He came from behind to win on the second run, but that seemed beyond even him today. He was only thirteenth fastest on the first run, and allowing for one disqualification he still had to recover 11 places on the second. He did so with 0.12sec to spare over Phil Mahre, one of the American whizzes on the circuit.

The net result was that Stenmark acquired 25 more World Cup points to increase his total at the top to 200. Mahre himself picked up 45 points, 20 from his second place today and five more for winning the combined slalom and downhill. His total is now 168, 20 more than the third placed skier, Peter Müller, downhill specialist who is out of action at the moment because of injury.

In his first run in this Arlberg-Kandahar competition was unusually close and, for all his humble, even humiliating, position, Stenmark was only a few tenths of a second behind Wolfgang Gröber, a little-known Austrian, and two thirds of a second behind Mahre. The second run was a different matter. In the first half of the race, Stenmark was in the lead, but a small mistake (in much the same place as his brother, Steve, came to grief), but a second of 0.50sec seemed likely to hold up.

But Stenmark's intermediate time, 23.5sec, herded another possibility, four de force, he still had a half a second to make good but when the white-clad Swede is in full cry all things seem possible. He came roaring down the

second half of the course in complete control at full throttle and seemed to hurt himself through the last few gates. The clock stopped at 49.52sec. The silent man from just down the side of the arctic circle had spoken again in the most articulate way he can—with his skis.

Mahre takes away two treasured moments, with strong British connections. As the winner of the combined he was presented with the Arnold Lunn trophy, a gold medal offered by the three Arlberg-Kandahar clubs, and a diamond "K", a Kandahar club badge awarded to the winner of a series of exceptional performances in the series.

The World Cup downhill is now developing into a fascinating two-horse race between Steve Nodding, Canadian, and Gerd Wenzel, of Austria. Three successive wins by Nodding in mid-season promised to place him on an unattainable peak, but Wenzel has since returned to the attack and his victory yesterday, worth 25 points, brought him level with the Canadian on 105.

Nodding was third, which served no purpose at all. World Cup skiers can count only their five best results and Nodding had already totted up two thirds, each worth 15 points, in addition to his three wins. Both men are in the position of being able to add to their haul only by finishing first or second.

Konrad Bartelski, the lone British challenger, is not overrating his appearance in this company, had another disappointing run to finish 33rd. Afterwards he remarked that he had achieved



Stenmark: had 0.12 seconds to spare after a stunning second run yesterday.

more air time than his father, a reference to a lack of control, at the Kangaroo jump in particular. His father, it needs to be added, is a former K.I. pilot.

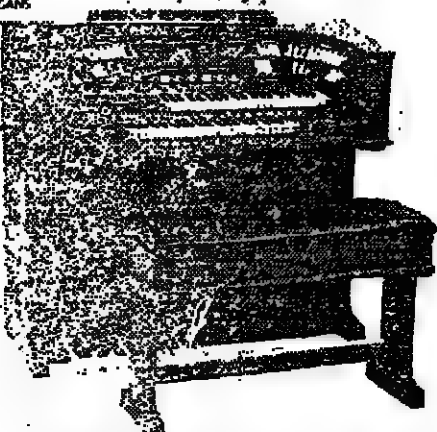
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For two centuries and more the piano has been the great midwife of music, essential to the work not only of professional performers but also of conductors, scholars, composers and teachers. String players may be able to survive without gaining any skill on it—may have to, given the amount of time they must devote to their own instruments—but otherwise learning the piano must be the first step towards becoming a musician. It is heartening, therefore, that in the piano world there are so many signs of vigour, enthusiasm and growth.

This is especially remarkable at a time when, so it seems, no High Street is complete without its emporium stacked with monstrous electronic organs. Happily, the piano remains its primacy, as it must do if we are to remain concerned with music and not with mere playing-by-numbers.

That is not to say, though, that there is no room for alternatives. Indeed, increasing numbers of people are discovering the attractions of the piano's ancestors, the clavicord, the harpsichord, the forte-piano and their relatives, all of which can be had in modestly priced modern reproductions. And the real organ, the king of instruments, keeps its dedicated band of subjects in thrall.

If one wants evidence of the development of keyboard playing in Britain, then one need look no further than the statistics published by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, whose examinations are used by most teachers and budding musicians as a yardstick. There are no AB exams in "early" instruments—the implicit view is, rightly, that children should be started on the piano, then investigate historical keyboards later if they wish—and the population of young organists seems to be fairly constant, but the numbers of entrants for the piano examination are increasing markedly.

To take just one example, the number entering for the most elementary exam, grade I, jumped from just

under 25,000 in 1975 to nearly 39,000 in 1979, the last year for which figures are available. That is an increase of roughly 56 per cent in four years, something far different in scale from any change in the population during that time. And in the other lower grades the growth has been hardly less astonishing, suggesting an extraordinary rush to the keyboard among children roughly from eight

to 13. Why should this have happened and, as all the signs indicate, be continuing? No doubt some of the reasons may be due to those local authorities which have encouraged their young pianists, whether by making provision for lessons in school, by paying in part or in whole for private lessons, and generally by presenting music as a live, engaging subject.

It would be said if any of this good work were to be lost. But if local government has been less generous it is certain that the torch will continue to be carried forward by the profession of private teachers, among whom it is possible to

detect a burgeoning of optimism and energy. To some extent this is due to the emergence from the music colleges of a generation of young people dedicated to private teaching. One of the criticisms of the Gulbenkian report on music education, published four years ago, was that colleges tended to provide training for schoolteachers but not for those working at home; this is now beginning to change.

Moreover, the new, professional teacher is not afraid to charge a professional fee, nor are parents averse to paying more for teachers who show drive and have some understanding of how to guide children towards skill and enjoyment.

The rising standards in music teaching must also be attributed in part to the work of the professional associations, the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the European Piano Teachers' Association. The latter has been running for only three years but has already done much through its journal and its meetings to give teachers information

and support. Rising standards here inevitably lead to rising standards among pupils: of those 39,000 who took grade I in 1979, more than 12 per cent passed with distinction, compared with less than 9 per cent in 1975.

It will be some years before those taking grade I in the late 1970s are knocking on the door of the Royal Academy of Music, but even now there seems to be a constant gradual rise in the standards of applicants reaching the colleges. This in turn is reflected in the growing ranks of British keyboard artists of international standing.

For every Curzon or Lymington of the older generation there are a dozen outstanding pianists in their thirties and forties, and Britain can also boast some of the world's leading specialists in early keyboard instruments, like Christopher Hogwood and Trevor Pinnock, as well as the formidable organists who have always been its blessing. Yet it would be wrong to suppose that a nation's

continued on facing page

Nest of pipes that's a work of art...

Britain's market for pipe organs, once almost exclusively churches and concert halls, has widened over the years. Universities and schools are now among the builders' clients, and some instruments are bought for private music rooms.

This is one reason for a growth in demand. In their two volumes on *The Classical Organ in Britain*, published by Posit Press, John P. Rowntree and John F. Brennan point out that 118 new organs with mechanical action were bought in the 19 years up to 1974, in the next four years 106 were supplied. But it is fair to say that while the market has grown, clients have been buying smaller instruments than in the past. This partly reflects rising costs, particularly heavy in an industry which requires hand craftsmanship and scarce materials, such as seasoned hardwood, ivory and metal alloys.

Many British firms belong to the Federation of Master

Organ Builders, but some do not. A number have been in business for decades, but it tends to be a changing scene, with large firms buying up smaller concerns, and young men setting up their own companies.

Change has been accentuated by the requirements of churches with unconventional shapes, and of libraries in the modern vernacular. As one builder put it, the roast beef of nineteenth-century English organs has been replaced with instruments more suitable for playing Bach.

This evolution has encouraged imports from continental countries, but the head of a London firm said: "I think the import flow has eased up. We export quite a lot". He thought the introduction of the cinema organ had adversely affected

British pipe organ manufacture between the wars. Modern church organs face one hazard that those of former days did not—heating geared to energy saving. Systems which blast out warm air for a short period while worshippers are at their devotions, then switch off sharply, cause a good deal of condensation and damage to metalwork.

But in another way builders find life is now easier for them. Many old organs were placed in corners where they may have looked elegant but were difficult to play and the working parts were inaccessible to the craftsmen called in to carry out repairs. Organists have more say in the placing now. As one has commented, it should always be remembered the organ is a musical instrument as well as a work of art.

Patrick O'Leary

...and an organ that's almost automatic

There are those unkind enough to say an electronic organ is the ideal gift for a man who does not like music. To which retailers retort that £60m a year tinkling through the hills is a hit tune in anybody's chart. Unfortunately, that is the figure for sales in 1979, and indications are that the outcome for last year will be sharply lower—one estimate is £36m.

However, it is still a business which has come a long way in a short time, buoyed up by enthusiastic promotion. Anyone leafing through the magazines *Organ Player* and *Home Organist* will find test runs of the newest keyboards whose language rivals that of motoring correspondents. The similarity is enhanced with more than 40 firms competing for an annual market of 25,000 electronic organs and related units. British production is outpaced by imports from Japan, America and Italy.

One instrument, I read, has "all in all, a nice set of 'automatics', while another is praised for its synthesizer and auto arpeggio section. In a third, "the accordion has a slight delay in build-up to simulate the slow attack of a reed".

The road-test analogy reached its peak with one new model, described as easier to drive than many organs now on sale. It is possible for the do-it-yourselfer to build an organ, although tinkering with anything electrical is not recommended for people who are not absolutely sure what they are doing.

But the basic appeal of the electronic organ is not its association with the car, not even the portable which will run off a battery. People buy one because they like the sound it makes; incidentally, if you have neighbours who do not like the sound, there are models fitted with earphones.

There is also the advantage of being able to make recognizable noises without years of practice. "You can play a little tune in about half an hour", a salesman said.

Mr L. S. Long, secretary of the Federation of Organ Clubs, said: "I know of people in their 80s who have started to learn, as well as the very young. The old idea of family entertainment where someone used to play the piano in the parlour has come back, but now everyone can join in".

It is believed there are about 350 electronic organ societies of one kind or other in Britain. Some are devoted to the preservation of cinema organs.

Controversy still simmers over whether electronic organs are suitable for church music. A trade association spokesman assured me that church authorities were getting over the bias against them, while an organist asserted that churches which had electronic organs were replacing their bias against them.

Perhaps the last word should be given to the man who sold one to the Caldy Island monastery in Carmarthen Bay. This involved a five-mile voyage on the deck of a small ship, and on the island the journey continued in a trailer drawn by a farm tractor.

Such hard-sell may have been a case of needs must when the devil drives. The supplier was quoted as saying: "The monks wanted to replace their old single-manual organ which had given up the ghost."

Cheap foreign imports challenge British piano makers

Cheaper imports from foreign manufacturers are increasingly challenging British piano makers in their home market. In the first nine months of 1980 imports took 51 per cent of sales in the United Kingdom. Most of these instruments are uprisings from makers in Eastern Europe and countries like South Korea, Taiwan, China, Brazil and even the United States.

This import penetration comes at a time of falling demand. The British industry estimates that the market was down about 29 per cent in the first nine months of last year compared with the similar period in 1979. But during this time imports fell by only 10 per cent so that their share rose from 40 to 51 per cent.

British manufacturers say that pianos from such areas as Eastern Europe are being sold in Britain for little more than the cost of the raw materials used to produce them. While the retail price of the least expensive British upright is about £1,000 to £1,200, an imported piano can be bought for about £800 to £900.

The worries of British makers, who produce about 20,000 pianos a year, are shared by those elsewhere in Western Europe, and the industry in the European Economic Community has complained to the EEC Commission about competition from the Eastern block. The British and continental companies are particularly concerned about imports from East Germany and Poland, not only because of the difference in prices, but also because Western producers do not have compensating outlets in the East.

Complaints about East Germany must be put into perspective. Leipzig is the home of the famous firm of Blüthner. One leading British expert described the standard of lesser East German models as "quite fair", but he referred to the overall quality of pianos from South Korea, Taiwan and China as "scarcely adequate". Another specialist agreed that technically such instruments could be improved, but he thought that a buyer was not necessarily failing to get value for what he paid.

There is also concern about cheap American pianos coming into Britain. One sales director said that while allegations of cheap Mexican labour being employed had not been confirmed, there were grounds for suspecting American pianos were being dumped in Britain. Imported uprisings from the United States were selling at £800 or £900.

Another anxiety is about the absence of country-of-origin markings on some imported pianos. This means that a South Korean product with a German-sounding name can be imported into Britain through Holland and there is nothing to tell a potential customer that he is not looking at a German model.

One complaint is that many pianos which are genuinely German come from East Germany, and a member of the public may imagine they are from the high-quality manufacturers in the Federal Republic. Some cheap imports carry the name of their country of origin, but the British are lobbying the Government to tighten identification.

Japanese imports do not involve the cheaper end of the market. The popularity of western music in Japan is now so great that the bulk of production is absorbed domestically. The demand for Yamahas in the United Kingdom is greater than the annual import figure of about 600 or 700.

While some months have shown an improvement in the market since the autumn, the British piano makers face a number of problems. The traditional sale of cheap imports. More than half British production normally goes for export and two-thirds of this to the rest of the EEC. West Germany has been the best overall market.

But the exchange rate is creating difficulties for sales in West Germany, and it has narrowed the traditional gap between the retail prices of German uprisings and similar local pianos in the British market.

This suggests that competition may sharpen in the

middle market at home and in Europe. One British manufacturer estimated that the effect of the exchange rate and normal price increases meant that their costs were 24 per cent higher than their competitors in France and Germany. If it were not for the high pound, there would be no problems at selling on the Continent.

Some Japanese uprisings are several hundred pounds cheaper in the United Kingdom than similar British instruments, again partly as a result of the exchange rate.

There has been some rationalization of production in Britain. John Broadwood and Sons, which has made pianos since 1728 and whose instruments were admired by Chopin, now has its uprisings made under licence by Kemble. Finding its works too small, Broadwood says that this arrangement enables it to increase production levels and maintain quality.

It continues to make its own grands to order. Its instruments have never been produced for stock, and it says that demand has always outstripped production.

Two firms, Zender and Rogers, closed last year and their pianos are now produced under licence by Barratt and Robinson, which some years ago took over Challen.

There would be more secondhand pianos on the British market if fewer were not exported. Last year Britain sent 20,000 pianos abroad, but only 11,000 of these were new. The older instruments go to countries like France and Italy.

Some tastes change. The baby grand, which makes inferior music to a good upright, has gone out of fashion. Adults are not less inhibited about taking up the piano again or even learning from scratch. The enthusiasm for taking examinations, however, shows no sign of abating, and sales suggest a strong fidelity to the piano. Pianists are not easily tempted by such gadgets as electronic organs.

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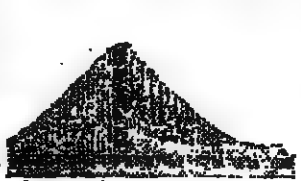
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Lord Chalfont

The danger signals flash again in the Middle East

It was difficult, on a recent tour of the Middle East, to avoid crossing the distinctive tracks of Foreign Office ministers engaged on reconnaissance missions of various kinds. A set of much larger footprints marked the passage of Dr Henry Kissinger, conducting his own brand of steady-eyed diplomacy.

The problems of the area are never far from the centre of the stage, and there are now clear signs that the Palestinian issue is about to enter a critical and possibly decisive phase. The almost unanimous message of the Arab countries, transmitted persistently to their western visitors and more recently proclaimed unambiguously from the Islamic Conference at Taif in Saudi Arabia, is that a stable Middle East is possible only in the context of an acceptable solution to the Palestinian problem.

If the public pronouncements of the Arab leaders at Taif are to be believed, this seems to involve, among other things, the "liberation" of Jerusalem. It is therefore not too alarmist to suggest that dangerous times lie ahead.

It would be comforting to suppose that, faced with the possibility that an area of profound strategic importance might soon become once more a theatre of war, the West had evolved a common policy designed to protect its vital interests. It is, however, not the case. Disenfranchised by the apparent intransigence of Mr. Begin, the Carter administration, before it came to its inglorious and unlamented end, had begun to dismantle the structure of America's traditional support for Israel and for all practical purposes had abandoned the general direction of policy which began with such euphoria at Camp David.

President Reagan is unlikely to be quite so ready to abandon the Israeli cause, and if Mr.

Shimon Peres, with his more flexible and imaginative approach to the Palestinian problem, should succeed Mr. Begin as Prime Minister of Israel in July, the way might still be open for some modified version of the Camp David formula.

Mr. Peres favours the Jordanian option, in which King Hussein would assume a leading and decisive role in the future of the West Bank. He understands the clear advantages which would accrue not only to Jordan and Israel but to the region as a whole from collaboration in the construction of roads, railways, ports and canals, and underlines the importance to the West of an area of prosperity and stability stretching from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea.

His attitude to Jerusalem postulates freedom of access to the holy places ("they can fly their flags on them if they want to") and a system of self-governing boroughs within the city. Some of the statements from the Islamic Conference suggests that King Hussein might, however, be reluctant to assume the role proposed for him. He is a stronger and more confident leader than he was five years ago; he has an alliance with Iraq, one of the most resolutely anti-Zionist countries in the Middle East; he commands a powerful and loyal army; and he displays all the signs of a rugged and uncompromising independence.

Meanwhile the situation is further complicated by the lingering presence in the wings of the western Europeans. It is a matter for some concern that the only important foreign policy initiative on which the countries of the EEC have so far been able to agree should be one so fraught with danger. It is, of course, entirely possible that the political and strategic implications of the



King Hussein and Mr Shimon Peres: favouring a Jordanian option on the future of the West Bank.

Venice Declaration have been fully and rigorously analysed, but it is not a proposition upon which it would be prudent to bet a great deal of money.

On the surface the declaration is reasonably pious and well-intentioned, except for its bland assumption that the Palestine Liberation Organisation "will have to be associated with the negotiations". It is not immediately obvious why Israel should be expected to negotiate with an organisation which is openly committed to its destruction. There is indeed something about the Venice Declaration which suggests a severe attack of the Lancaster

House syndrome—a messianic conviction that if only "all the parties concerned" can be gathered around a table, the irreconcilable can be reconciled.

Furthermore, behind the Venice Declaration lies a fatal flaw in the contemporary approach of many western countries to international relations—an apparent belief that the formulation of theoretical solutions is an adequate substitute for the practical exercise of power.

After considering confidential position papers submitted by the principal member-states, the Nine have formulated a

series of "options" covering Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, self-determination for Gaza and the West Bank, security guarantees and the status of Jerusalem. The basic requirement is Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem within two years, with security guaranteed by an international force under United Nations auspices.

The range of options for Jerusalem have one element in common—partition in one form or another. What is not clear is what the EEC would do if any or all of these options became

part of an agreement imposed upon Israel (many of them would never be accepted voluntarily) and if Israel were subsequently threatened with attack. For it should never be forgotten that while Arab political concessions can easily be repudiated, Israeli territorial concessions can only be reversed by force.

The hidden assumption seems to be that the responsibility for guaranteeing any agreement will be principally that of the United Nations. References to the United Nations are unlikely to be taken very seriously and western Europe cannot guarantee its own security, much less that of Israel. If

the "options" result in settlement, well and good; if not someone else will have to pick up the pieces. President Reagan, as the evidence of his statements and the attitudes of his new State Department team, is unlikely to be enthusiastic about a European initiative which might conceivably produce short-term solutions but would almost certainly contain the seeds of ultimate disaster.

For there should be no doubt in the mind of any western leader that if Israel believes itself to be abandoned in the interests of western relations with the oil-producing countries and under threat of attack from some of those

countries, there will be another war. At the very least this might aggravate the already substantial shift in the balance of power in the area; it might even bring a Russian military presence to the eastern Mediterranean coast.

There is, however, an even worse contingency, which no one can afford to discount. It is that in any future Middle Eastern war the decisive factor might be the nuclear weapon. Pakistan's "Islamic Bomb" programme is now well advanced; Iraq has a French Osiris-type nuclear reactor and a supply of weapons grade plutonium.

The Iranian air attack on the Iraqi nuclear installation early in the Gulf war did little serious damage and most intelligence assessments indicate that Iraq might have a nuclear bomb in five years at most. Libya has made at least one recent approach to China in an attempt to acquire nuclear weapons and has also helped to finance the Pakistani programme.

What is more immediately significant is that few serious observers are now in any doubt that Israel already has a substantial stockpile of nuclear weapons and is acquiring missile systems capable of at least intermediate-range delivery. Furthermore, the Israelis, with a three-figure annual inflation rate, are no longer in the mood to spend a large proportion of their national resources maintaining extensive conventional defences.

It is right that the search for a fair and durable settlement in the Middle East should be at the top of the international agenda; but it would be appallingly dangerous to pursue any initiative which might reasonably be perceived by Israel as a threat to its security and eventually to its survival.
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Peter Jay

Memo to the Labour Party: prime ministers are chosen by the Queen

Who chooses the Prime Minister? This question has figured prominently in the debate within the Labour Party about the method of selecting its leader.

It is said, on the one hand, that the new system adopted at the Wembley special conference will give the trade union bosses, who are supposed to manipulate at will the 40 per cent of electoral weight given to the unions affiliated to the Labour Party, the power to select the Prime Minister and even to "recall" him. It is added that this is unconstitutional, undemocratic, dangerous, contemptuous of Parliament and grounds enough for right-thinking people to consider leaving the party and forming another.

It is countered, on the other hand, that the Labour Party has a right to select its leader in its own way; that the new system has been adopted in accordance with the party's constitution and, even, that it will strengthen democracy within the party. In the heat generated by this argument too little attention has been given to the facts of the British constitution and in consequence false assumptions are being made both by those who fear and by those who hope to see a Labour Prime Minister chosen by extra-parliamentary preference.

Prime Ministers are chosen by the Queen. In inviting a person to form her Government and so to become Prime Minister she is constrained alone by the duty to see that the country's government is carried on.

In consequence of the powers which the House of Commons has won over the centuries to control expenditure and to vote taxes and other essential acts of government the Queen's Government can only be carried on by someone who commands a majority in the Commons; and that is almost bound to be someone who is himself—or

herself—a member of the Commons. Therefore in practice—though not in law—the Queen is constrained to choose her Prime Minister as someone in the Commons who commands the support of a majority there. Frequently there is only one such person at any given moment. Given the workings of the two-party system he or she is usually the leader of the Conservative or Labour party has a majority in the Commons, although a wider choice can arise if the members from either or if the members from both party are indecisive in choosing a leader (note that before Mr. Heath and Mrs. Thatcher almost every Conservative Prime Minister first and party leader second).

Until very recently there was no such person as the Leader of the Labour Party. Until well after Harold Wilson was elected leader, the office to which he and all of his predecessors were elected was that of leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party; and, as such, the election by fellow MPs of a leader could be regarded as a convenience to the Queen in helping her to identify who, when Labour was in the majority, was likely to be able to lead her Government successfully.

It was only thought to be a trivial act of simplification or vanity when the title was changed to Leader of the Labour Party. But the change was not a trivial one. The argument that the Party, more widely defined, should have a hand in electing its own leader. And so, perhaps, it should. Indeed, there is no obligation on it to choose a leader from the House of Commons or indeed to shut the category of peers, criminals, minors, lunatics and aliens who are ineligible for membership of the Commons.

But—and this is the disregarded point—none of this remotely changes the British constitution nor the Queen's duties and prerogatives. In appointing a Prime Minister, if Labour won an election under a leader who was nonetheless unable or unlikely to command a majority in the Commons, perhaps because he was not a member of it or simply because too few others would support him, the Queen would be



Sir Harold Wilson: he was Prime Minister when the title changed from leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party to Leader of the Labour Party.

obliged to invite someone else to form a government.

That would be likely to be the person who had been—or would have been, had the practice continued—elected leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party under the old system. If, of course, the Labour MPs were willing to follow and support the party leader elected by the conference, no doubt he would be asked to be Prime Minister; but there again there would be no violation of constitutional theory or practice, since it would still be his backing in Parliament, and not his extra-parliamentary status, which was the necessary and sufficient condition of his appointment.

Even more absurd is the suggestion that the Labour Party conference, or the trade union bosses there at, could dismiss a Labour Prime Minister in office. They could, of course, elect a new leader of the Party; but, so what?

A Prime Minister in office must resign if and can be forced to resign only if he can no longer carry on the Queen's Government. If he can command a majority in the Commons, no amount of knavery or what-have-you outside can displace him. Even if he loses his majority, he still has a right to call an election and, even then, and even if he loses it, to meet the new Parliament before resigning.

What is more, even if enough Labour MPs deprive the Government of its majority in the Commons were minded to withdraw their support from the existing Labour Prime Minister because of what had happened at the Party conference (and that could have happened over policy or other questions at any time in the past), the Prime Minister would

still have the options of advising the Queen to send for someone else (including the Conservative leader) or to dissolve Parliament so causing a General Election. This power might well deter MPs from any sort of conference decision, especially if they disagreed with it; but even if it did not, it would still be, as it should be, their decision, not the conference's, which mattered.

This whole question, therefore, of how the Prime Minister is chosen is quite unaffected by what arrangements the Labour Party, as distinct from the Parliamentary Labour Party, makes for choosing its leader. The Labour Party conference can change and has changed the Party's constitution; but it cannot and has not changed the British constitution.

The Queen's duties and prerogatives remain what they were; and the de facto need for a majority in Parliament in order to carry on her Government is quite undisturbed. It is only the illiterate and erroneous teachings of some contemporary political science which have engendered the school-boy howler that the nominal leader of an electorally successful party automatically becomes Prime Minister.

There may or may not be sufficient reasons for the creation of a "non-parliamentary" party and for adherence to it (the question of the nature of grounds for Party loyalty have been discussed in this space recently). But whatever they are, the bogus argument that the non-parliamentary election of the Party's leader threatens the choice of and the tenure of future Labour Prime Ministers—the prejudice of the sovereignty of Parliament and national democracy—cannot be one of them.
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A change of heart for the disabled

Having got off to an indifferent start with the International Year of Disabled People, there are now signs that the future in Britain for the disabled may not be too gloomy.

The work of Mrs Ursula Keeble, who is employed by 14 disability organizations, has persuaded a number of councils to change their minds about cutting services to the disabled rather than face court action over the legality of such moves.

More crucially, it is now becoming clear that the Government is embarrassed at the way local authorities have responded to their calls for savings and previous ministerial statements about the disabled.

The official party for international year was boycotted by Mr Colin Low, himself a blind lecturer in law, who was invited as president of the National Federation of the Blind. He described the reception at 10 Downing Street as an "obscene irrelevance" when the Government was cutting services to the disabled, including cuts of up to 10 per cent in the value of social security benefits; reductions in local authority services to the handicapped; and a review of the quota system for disabled workers which he said would lead to its abandonment.

Professor Peter Townsend, chairman of the Disability Alliance, attended the reception both to present to the Prime Minister the text of a resolution passed unanimously at a conference of disability groups and to hear what ministers had to say in response to the widespread charges that Government policy is bearing disproportionately on the disabled.

The resolution itself called on the Government to honour pre-election promises by introducing an allowance for the most severely disabled people regardless of age, sex or when or how the disability occurred.

Mr Hugh Rossi, who has replaced Mr. Reg Prentice as Minister for the Disabled, told Professor Townsend he regretted that Mr. Prentice's publicly stated view that disabled people should share cuts in public expenditure.

He went on to say that the disabled should be protected against any further cuts in public expenditure. Professor Townsend, who was not alone when Mr Rossi made those remarks, understood the minister to mean that he regretted that the disabled had suffered at all from cuts in social services.

The substance of that interpretation was confirmed by Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Social Services and Dr Gerard Vaughan, Minister of State for Health, at the same function. They referred to ministerial statements that vulnerable minorities should be protected. Those statements, the two ministers said, had specified not only those aged 75 and over and the most severely disabled as groups to be protected, but also that the home help service should not be cut back. "That was news to me," Professor Townsend said. "I do not recall such specific guidance being issued by ministers. It should be welcomed and ministers encouraged in this international year to enlarge on their advice."

It may also be news to those local authorities who have reduced the home help service or introduced charges for the formerly free service. The London borough of Redbridge, which introduced new charges last April, conducted a survey after it became clear that a

large number of elderly and disabled people had now cancelled the service.

The survey, which has not yet been published, showed that 42 of the 130 people who applied had cancelled the service immediately the charges were imposed. Only three were aged under 70 and only eight were not receiving supplementary benefit.

Ministers have responded to publicity about the plight of people receiving supplementary benefit by advising local authorities that they should not charge them for home help services. Redbridge has now recommended that people receiving supplementary benefit or who are disabled should be exempt from such charges.

The effects on disabled people of cuts or charges in the home help service was one of the main reasons for disability groups coming together to employ Mrs Keeble. They argue that imposing charges for essential services on disabled people who cannot afford to pay is effectively withdrawing the service from them.

They cite legal opinion that once a need has been identified under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970, it must be met by the responsible council. Mrs Keeble has so far persuaded a number of councils to change their minds, for example by installing a stairlift for a child when the authority had spent the money on a different person. But a number of cases remain on her files and will be taken to court if the councils concerned prove intransigent.

The ministers' statements are bound to strengthen the resolve of disability organizations in insisting on no cuts for disabled people.

Pat Healy

Social Services Correspondent

A GANG OF UNLIKELY HEROES

Among the attractive characteristics of Americans is their persistent self-questioning. They are never sure that they are doing things right, always keen to monitor their performance.

That explains why the very first question asked at last week's press conference for most of the freed hostages was from a reporter who wondered whether he and his colleagues, in their anxiety to be first and best with the news, had overdone it.

It was, in a sense, pathetic. Here was the first formal public appearance by men and women who had been occupying the headlines, from their inaccessibly confined, for the best part of 15 months.

We should have been bursting with questions about their ordeal. Yet the first was not about them but about us, the reporters. How do you think we are doing?

By any previous standard the press had overdone it. Hundreds of reporters, trailing electronic gadgetry, had hounded the victims from Algiers to Wiesbaden to West Point to Washington.

No expense had been spared. For their arrival on American soil at Stewart airport in New York state, a portable satellite

dish had been erected on a hill-side to beam the distant shots—partially obscured by a fuel truck—to a breathless world. Answering that first news conference question, Bruce Laing, the charge d'affaires at the embassy, said the press had been "understanding" and added: "We have no apprehensions about dealing with the press."

Indeed, many of the hostages ignored the barriers which officials had placed between them and reporters. At both Wiesbaden and West Point they voluntarily offered themselves for interviews.

What we often forget as we covered the story was that most of the hostages were diplomats, used to being more or less in the public eye and trained to acquit themselves well. Mr Laing pointed that out at the press conference when he described himself and his colleagues as the "embassy in exile."

It was one of those casual remarks which suddenly illuminates a new area of consideration. People whose faces we knew only from photographs taken in captivity were suddenly fleshed out into real people with real jobs.

Hostage Bruce German became Bruce German, the

budget officer, sending memos to staff to cut their consumption of paper clips. Hostage John Graves was John Graves, the public relations officer, showing during the conference that he had not lost his talent for verbal obfuscation. Hostage Thomas Schaefer was the air attaché, doing whatever mysterious things such functionaries do.

They sat there, in three tiered rows on the stage of the Eisenhower Auditorium, behind tables covered with light blue cloth, looking like contestants in some grossly expanded edition of *University Challenge*. Following the train of thought inspired by Mr Laing, it was possible to appreciate what a highly unlikely set of heroes they are.

Diplomats are hardly anyone's favourite people, except those of other diplomats. In the United States especially they are regarded as a privileged and probably idle gang who feed at the public trough and see exotic places at government expense.

Did not President Reagan, after all, gain power partly on a programme of slashing federal spending and the bureaucracy? And was not his very first executive act symbolic of that pledge, when he signed an order



forbidding any new hirings in the federal service? Indeed, he boasted of it when he greeted the hostages, saying it was a reason why they were needed back in their old jobs.

Yet because of their long ordeal, these people had deservedly been forgiven for being part of the free-spending federal government machine. Most were clearly enjoying their unfamiliar heroic status almost as much as they enjoyed meeting their nearest and dearest at that peculiar old hotel up at West Point.

The second moment of illumination during this last crowded week came from a tele-

vision commentator. To fill in time between shots of sobbing hostages and their relatives on the south lawn of the White House, he recalled that the last time there had been so much weeping on that lawn had been in November, 1977, when police used tear gas against a crowd of noisy demonstrators protesting at the visit to Washington of the Shah of Iran.

It would not be right to say that relations between Iran and the United States had come full circle since then, but the remark did point up a neat symmetry. Tears at the beginning, tears at the end and tears for many months in between.

Of the millions of words to have been written about the hostages and about relations with Iran in the past fortnight, some of the most interesting came from the pen of one of the hostages, the same Mr Laing. On the day Mr Reagan greeted them on the south lawn, the *New York Times* published a memorandum to the State Department which Mr Laing had signed. In August, 1979, on the subject of negotiating with Iran.

Probably a composite work by several of the embassy staff, the memorandum analysed traits in the Iranians' character which made them hard to

deal with. "Perhaps the single dominant aspect of the Persian psyche is an overriding egotism," it said.

Its antecedents lie in the long Iranian history of instability and insecurity which put a premium on self-preservation. The practical effect of it is an almost total preoccupation with self and leaves little room for understanding points of view other than one's own.

The Persian experience has been that nothing is permanent and it is commonly perceived that hostile forces abound. In such an environment each individual must be constantly alert for opportunities to protect himself against the malevolent forces that would otherwise be his undoing. He is obviously justified in using almost any means available to exploit such opportunities."

Those observations turned out painfully prophetic. With hindsight, somebody in the State Department or the White House should have digested them and given them weight when assessing the likelihood that the decision to admit the Shah for medical treatment here might put American representatives in Tehran in danger. When asked to comment on this at the press conference, John Limbert, the political

officer at the embassy, gave a wry answer: "When you're in the embassy in Tehran, or wherever, it seems... that you always know better what Washington should do. This is natural among foreign service officers."

The self-questioning that is following their release, now that euphoria is waning, is not about who was to blame initially nor even about whether the press was guilty of excess. It is about the more fundamental question of whether the deal by which they were freed was or was not shameful.

The division between hawks and doves has a depressing familiarity to those who remember the debate over Vietnam. The hawks say the deal amounted to bartering with terrorists and should be discredited by the new Administration.

The doves say the important thing was that the hostages were released alive and that it is now in America's strategic interest to pursue good relations with whatever authority exists in Iran. Mr Reagan is taking a circumspect position. In his speech of welcome to the hostages he employed the rhetoric of the hawks, yet he is acting like a dove in adhering to the terms of President Carter's agreement.

Once again we have to look to the "success" press conference for a nugget of wisdom. Victor Tomseth, the embassy's senior political officer, said: "If we look beyond the rhetoric... we do see that there is a far greater recognition in previous terrorist incidents except those that have ended tragically."

During the crisis, the stress placed by the press on the paramount importance of the hostages' safe return made it virtually impossible for the Government to assert any other priority, even had they wanted to.

The tumultuous reaction to their return last week—the ribbons, the banners, the parades—was a celebration of the triumph of humanity and a vindication of Washington's policy of patience. Those who advocated a tougher line might reflect that they would have been playing their respective games with other people's lives.

In that the press focused the Government's mind on the primacy of the humanitarian aspect of the crisis, they can share some of the credit for the final happy conclusion. Another unlikely gang of heroes.

Michael Leapman



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TOWARDS A MASS PARTY

One of the consequences of Labour's Wembley fiasco is that attention has been directed more sharply than for some time to the anomaly of the union block vote. This attention is not just coming from the habitual critics of the unions and the party. Mr Denis Healey agreed in a radio interview yesterday that the system does need to be sorted out.

Dissatisfaction is even heard from some of the unions themselves. "Each union knows how many people pay the political levy," Mr Tom Jackson, the general secretary of the Union of Communication Workers, said last week, "and yet we know that some unions affiliate on more than their levy-paying membership. This is simply buying votes and buying influence". Another moderate union, APEX, declared over the weekend that "a new exists to consider the Party conference" and it would be no use doing that without a searching look at the system of the block vote.

Mr Jackson's comments point to the arbitrary way in which the system is operated. That is indeed a powerful criticism, but even if the arrangement was applied by each union in a uniform fashion it would still be open to objection. Ninety per cent of the votes at Labour conferences are in the hands of union delegations, who are able to vote on behalf of all the members of their union who have been affiliated to the party.

Sometimes the leader of the delegation decides how the block vote should be cast; often this is determined by the delegation collectively. But whichever it is, there can be no assurance that the decision relates even approximately to the views of the members on whose behalf the vote is cast. It is true that the

principle of representative democracy requires decisions to be made without the electorate being consulted every time. But the difference in this instance is that people join a union and elect its leaders on industrial not political grounds.

The system of the block vote is therefore a democratic absurdity. Yet it has to be acknowledged that it is an absurdity on which the forces of sanity and moderation within the party have relied throughout much of its history. This is because the Labour Party is to such a large extent the product of the unions. It grew out of a partnership between the unions and socialist idealists, represented for the most part in various socialist societies. While the idealists have, not surprisingly, provided most of the radical fervour, the unions have supplied the political ballast.

The unions are frequently criticized for acting as a negative influence within the party. Their reforming zeal is questioned; their interest in new ideas is often minimal; and they usually seem more concerned to secure a better material deal for their members than to transform society, except from time to time in their perorations. Indeed, their concern with party politics is in general by no means so great as is usually supposed. They want Labour to be in power because it is "their party", but some of the party's difficulties have come about because many union leaders do not attach a high priority to political matters.

Yet without the influence of the unions, the Labour Party would over the years have adopted many more foolish policies. With all their political failings, they have brought an earthy realism that is often sorely needed to the party's

deliberations. To say this is not to justify the block vote, still less to excuse the excessive role accorded to it in the new electoral college. But it would be no answer to the party's problems simply to sweep away the block vote and leave everything else unchanged.

The party conference would be even more extreme and create an even more appalling impression on the public than the shambles at Blackpool last October, if it was dominated by the constituency parties in their present condition. It is not true that all the local parties are under the control of the left; but most of them are, and some are under the sway of very unrepresentative extremist cliques. To leave the party in their care would be a recipe for disaster.

What is needed therefore is to get rid of the block vote without removing the influence of trade unionists from the party. This means that such a move should be accompanied, or better still preceded, by a massive drive to raise the level of individual membership. It is calculated that at the moment only 5 per cent of those affiliated to the party through their unions have also joined as individuals. Given the present structure of the party, there is not much incentive for any union member other than a political enthusiast to join as an individual—which goes a long way to explain why constituency parties are so unrepresentative.

But if the abolition of the block vote was not to leave Labour in an even worse condition, there would have to be a new determination to bring individuals into the party, and possibly new forms of organization for doing so. There is no satisfactory democratic alternative to a modern political party being a mass party, which Labour is certainly not today.

THE DISAPPEARING LANDSCAPE

If the House of Lords did not exist, it would have to be invented to deal with legislation like the Wildlife and Countryside Bill, whose committee stage continues this week. The Commons have scant time to spare for the close and patient scrutiny required for a miscellaneous Bill not in the mainstream of political controversy. Conservation is a field where powerful pressure groups oppose one another, and the Bill's progress is likely to be laborious. Many matters at issue are recalcitrant, especially those concerned with the protection of living species, from the Wart-hunter Grasshopper to Small Alison and the Least Lettuce. The Government will be required to defend the omission of powers to enable marine reserves to be established, for the protection in particular of the British estuaries where a large proportion of European wading birds winter.

The proposal to end the right of objectors to planned footpath closures to appeal to the minister looks as unwarrantable now as it did when first mooted. The local council will often not seem an impartial adjudicator in such cases, and the right of appeal can hardly be called unimpor-

tant when the minister rejects almost half of the 250 closure plans referred to him each year.

But the part of the Bill with greatest moment for the future character of the countryside is that which deals with the protection of areas of special importance for conservation. These will become more and more significant in future as modern farming methods transform natural habitats. The dismal statistics of lost diversity in the landscape are familiar: the disappearance of one-fifth of Exmoor since the war, the ploughing-up of half the downland in Wiltshire since 1937, the loss of eighty per cent of hedgerow trees in Norfolk since 1955, and so on.

In the main, these changes are not due to encroachment by the towns. Existing planning controls ensure that urban development cannot occur without due public scrutiny. It is changes in farming itself which have done the damage. They are so drastic that they make nonsense of any argument that, since the countryside we know is largely an artificial product of agriculture, farmers can safely be left to evolve new landscapes. The present pattern is in any case largely the product of policies giving grants for "improvements" such as the destruction of hedges, which

need critical examination in changed economic circumstances.

Some conservationists argue that it is time to extend planning controls to agriculture. Fundamentally a farmer has no more right (more or less) than the owner of any other kind of property to ravage his inheritance. Rather than create a complex and expensive new area of bureaucracy, it is preferable to proceed as far as possible by the use of inducement, not prohibition. But given that agriculture in general is to be unrestrained, the protection given to selected areas of special significance becomes crucially important. About one-fifth of our land area is designated as of special scientific interest, but even here negotiation and agreement, not compulsion, are the main means of protection. Restrictions on public spending limit what can be done in this way.

At present these sites are being destroyed at a frightening rate, often before conservation bodies even know they exist. The Bill would require owners to give notice of proposed changes, but would restrict this requirement to a small number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest chosen by the minister. This is too timid: all such sites should be included.

though she may be pushed or pulled into that soon. Dr David Owen, who grows day by day, refused to serve on the front benches and now, the Labour Party constituency party that he will not stand again as Labour candidate, although he is keeping his seat. Mr William Rodgers first agreed to serve Mr Foot and has now changed his mind and gone to the back benches.

Far nobody, however, has been sufficiently immoderate or plain sickened as to leave the Labour Party. The intolerable is being tolerated. In a score of statements and interviews they explain that you cannot, without anguish, walk out of a party that has become part of the warp and woof of your adult life.

It will take time, much as it took time for Cardinal Newman to cross over. Perhaps in May they will at last take the leap into the unknown by forming a new left-centre party. Why May? Well, the local government elections will be over. Moderates strike hard, although apparently they do not yet want to wound. The Gaitskill rump has so far been content to do just enough to be public, and it is true that the longer they hold on inside the Labour Party the more attractive they are to the media as a subject of conflict and political theatre. The moment they announce the formation of their new party awkward questions will arise. How many members and candidates? How much money? How do they stand in the opinion polls? Do they mean to fight the next by-election?

The media, of course, have always had during my time in politics a devotion to the rather apologetic or anti-parliamentary dream of a realignment of the parties, with a vague though huge centre block of middle opinion that would prefer to be governed by groups of the great and good—men and women of no particular commitment or party who put the national interest as they subjectively define it, first and last. Anybody is free to draw up his own list of the great and the good, and usually the names are much the same.

At least in theory, at opinion polls show, the idea of a new centre block, led by the Archangel Gabriel and with the latest Solomon as deputy leader, continues to lure an electorate that innocently believes you could get rid of tiresome,

muddled and muddled politics by getting rid of tiresome, muddled and muddled politicians. It is a sad fact that the more you read and the good touched pitch there to be marked for life. They are mortal men, if more arrogant than most.

In the end on any election day voters need a clear choice, and the Labour Party at least has won merit. They put the alternative beyond doubt. From Ramsay MacDonald to James Callaghan as Labour leaders, it was possible and even necessary for sane men to believe that Labour would not do in government what it promised to do in its constitution or some of its conference commitments. It would not take Clause IV literally but would work the system; though in doing so it would make gradual, Fabian advances towards collectivism and egalitarianism. It would stick to an essentially stable foreign and defence policy. It would respect the two party parliamentary system and the Constitution.

Under Mr Michael Foot—although as caretaker leader he obviously dislikes the way things are going—all that is now in question is it is not your judgment or mine, but for the judgment of experienced former Labour ministers like Mrs Williams, Mr Roy Jenkins, Dr Owen and Mr Rodgers that the Labour Party has changed its nature and is now a "left" and moderates cannot stomach it. It is, they say, no longer the party they joined and spent their lives working for; and it is therefore no longer the party that millions of electors have voted for.

Here are circumstances to be preferred to so-called middle ground politics. (Incidentally, any government has little choice except to occupy the middle ground, if only for recurrent electoral reasons.) Nobody now has any excuse for blinding himself to the fact that Labour, whether at a stroke or by years of legislative erosion, is at bottom a revolutionary party. And that the Conservatives are the brake on revolution, sometimes effective and sometimes soft as putty.

It is a clear choice at last; and the so-called Gang of Three, along with those who march or mark time with them, deserve thanks for defining it in their public statements and in their so far modest and all too moderate actions.

Human realities behind Nationality Bill

From Mr Anthony McSheehy

Sir, It seems to me that our legislators have not given any thought as to what it means to an individual when that individual suddenly discovers that he is no longer a citizen of the United Kingdom after having lived in England for over 66 years and having held a UK passport since 1929.

This is what happened to me when I applied to renew my passport last year (1980). I was told that according to an Act of Parliament of 1948 I was no longer a citizen of the United Kingdom because I was born in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Both my parents were British and I was born in October 1912.

I was severely shaken and angry and felt there must be some mistake. Why should I have my British nationality taken away from me? This did not even happen to traitors to their country!

I decided to take the matter up with my MP. He saw my point of view and took my case up on my behalf with the Home Office but to no avail. After much correspondence between the MP and the Home Office I received a letter from the Home Office stating that the law is the law and that the only means open to me was to make an application for UK citizenship and that would be considered sympathetically by the Secretary of State!

This I did. Just before Christmas I received a letter from the Home Office stating that my application for registration as a citizen of the UK and Colonies would be approved by the Secretary of State on receipt of £50. This is a pretty high sum for a pensioner to have to pay in order to confirm that he is a British subject!

As well as this I will have to take an oath of allegiance to the Crown. This I will be delighted to do as I have great admiration for Her Majesty and all the Royal Family.

I would mention that my father fought in the Boer War (on the British side) and was in the siege of Mafeking. On top of this he gave up a good position in Rhodesia to join the Great War. I myself served six years in the British Army during the last war as a volunteer. I am writing this to bring to the notice of those concerned what a farcical state we live in. A real Alice in Wonderland! I wonder how many other Acts of Parliament have been enacted without due consideration for the individual.

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY MCSHEEHY,
40 Lion Lane,
Haslemere,
Surrey.
January 18.

From Mr R. K. D. Shah
Sir, There is an unfortunate error in the report endorsing the continuing of the special quota voucher scheme for East African Asians. It is true, however, that the Home Secretary did affirm in the House of Commons on July 29 on the occasion of the publication of the White Paper that the special quota for East African Asians would not be affected by the nationality proposals. This, though, is hardly material for, as your Correspondent points out, they do not at present have the right of entry.

For those whose memory may be short, it is worth recalling that at the time independence was negotiated for the East African territories, specific assurances backed by legislation were given that the Asians would retain their former membership of British nationality in the form of citizenship of the United Kingdom.

Battle for the countryside

From Mr James Douglas

Sir, Your Environmental Correspondent's report, which unfortunately misquoted me in his article of January 30, "The growing battle for the countryside", I would be grateful if you would publish this letter at the earliest opportunity in order to put the record straight. I do not think the article claims that the whole thrust of the Wildlife and Countryside Bill is anti-farmer and anti-landowner. The Bill is not anti-farmer and landowner and it would be absurd for anyone to suggest that it is. The CLA welcomes the Bill. We endorse its provisions for the protection of selected sites of special scientific interest. Anybody who has discussed the Bill with me will be astonished to read the words attributed to me and could think me guilty of bad faith.

The worry lies not in the Bill but in some of the amendments tabled to it in the House of Lords which would impose extensive and unacceptable restrictions on agriculture.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES DOUGLAS,
Director-General,
Country Landowners Association,
16 Belgrave Square, SW1.
January 30.

Listed buildings

From the Treasurer of Christ Church, Oxford

Sir, In his letter published on January 21 the Secretary of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) after referring to the unauthorized stripping of the library interior at Wadham College, mentioned that the commission is charged with the duty of recording historic buildings.

On page 123 of the commission's Survey and Inventory of the City of Oxford (HMSO, 1939), towards the end of eight columns of print about Wadham College, it is stated that: "The Library, on the first floor, has no old features except a painted glass shield of arms..."

and colonies and it was clearly understood that this would carry with it the right of entry into the United Kingdom.

The 1958 Commonwealth Immigrants Act withdrew that right and converted it into mere eligibility for entry under the voucher system which was then set up. It was not by statutory authority but rather by administrative action and the machinery of which could not, as the recent case of R. v. E.C.O. Bombay Ex-P. Amin (1980) 2 All E.R. 837 shows, even be reviewed by the courts. A most essential attribute of citizenship was thus removed and a solemn pledge broken.

As if that was not enough, the highly complex and circumspect provisions of the Immigration Act, 1971, which introduced the concept of partiality further sought to legitimate the diminution of the status of the British East African Asians.

It must be admitted, however, that throughout this sorry affair the system of the quota voucher has continued, in a lesser or greater degree depending on the circumstances, but already echoes may be heard of the voices of those who urge that a time limit be placed on the continued operation of the system and the changes effected by the Nationality Bill will surely lend support to such a view. Under the new law the East African Asians will become British overseas citizens; neither British nor citizens of anywhere but overseas they will certainly stay.

The record of successive governments on this subject, Sir, is one of betrayal and breached undertakings. Yet once again we are asked to put faith in the Government's statement and to believe that the special position of these Asians will be continued. This remains to be seen.

Having said that, I hasten to add that as a long-standing critic of the Home Office in these matters, but as one who understands the Nationality Bill and the need for it, I am glad that it is on the whole a fairly balanced measure and can only express support for it, subject only to the criticism of it on the position of the East African Asians.

Yours truly,
R. K. D. SHAH,
Wayne & Company,
Solicitors,
5 Laings Corner,
London Road,
Mitcham,
Surrey.
January 23.

From Mr S. Hugh-Jones
Sir, Whatever else British nationality law may contain, it must contain a provision that enables second-class citizens—if we must have such a category—to become first-class ones, and by right, not by administrative whim.

Ten years ago, foreseeing the sort of legislation now proposed, I invited the Home Office to register as a British citizen my son, who was born in India, but born in India. This (in those days) would have given him the same rights as anyone born here: or so I thought.

The Home Office refused, and when I insisted, pointed out gleefully that it would be pointless to register a child in the law, who rights were available to those who became British by registration—but my son was British already.

As I pointed out to them, this meant that one could be a Chinese-speaking Hongkonger and achieve full rights by descent, but once born in India, this (in those days) would have given him the same rights as anyone born here: or so I thought.

The new Bill appears to resolve this injustice by removing the rights of the Chinese-speaking Hongkongers as well—a typical Home Office move.

Yours truly,
STEPHEN HUGH-JONES,
49 Canonbury Park North, N1.
January 28.

Youthful band

From Sir Charles Groves

Sir, In times of recession human misery in the shape of terrible unemployment may well make the majority indifferent to cuts in education and the arts. The Youth Orchestra will cease to exist by the end of next year because the Arts Council has withdrawn its modest grant without notice. Since 1947 this orchestra, unique in its conception and splendour in its traditions, and wonderfully consistent in the quality of its performances, has gained an enviable international reputation. At least four of our leading young conductors now in demand throughout the world are former members of the orchestra and the orchestra profession is alive with men and women proud to have worn an NYO badge.

I should have thought that Government could have spared one of its thousands of grants to help to deliver a healthy plant and others like it, should not wither and die.

Yours, etc.
CHARLES GROVES,
(President of the National Youth Orchestra),
12 Camden Square, NW1.

The Pope's visit

From the Reverend P. E. Urrell

Sir, Why is there controversy surrounding the idea that the Pope might celebrate the Eucharist in Canterbury Cathedral in 1982? Mass is (and has been) regularly celebrated there by Catholic priests in the persons of the Dean and Chapter.

The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission agreed as long ago as 1972 that both communities are doing the same thing in the Eucharist and expressed the hope that, in view of the agreement we have reached on Eucharistic faith, this doctrine will no longer continue an obstacle to the unity we seek.

Let both Catholic bishops, John Paul II (whose predecessor St Gregory commissioned St Augustine to come to Canterbury in 597) and Robert Runcie stand together at the altar in that holy place to obey the Lord's command in remembrance of him.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP URSELL, Chaplain,
Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

Attitudes of Islam on Palestine

From Professor Musa Mazzawi

Sir, In your editorial today (January 29) you label the attitude of the Islamic leaders towards the Palestinian problem as "negative". I say that what has so far happened at the conference in regard to the Palestinian problem is likely to spoil prospects of what could be the most promising year in the Middle East for some time.

Your attitude, Sir, is unrealistic. The Arabs, and particularly the Palestinians, are tired of friends who, in the name of moderation or whatever, are always talking about "jam tomorrow". The Palestinians have been the direct victims of substantial injustice for more than thirty years. So many resolutions of the United Nations have been taken to uphold their rights, but with little or no positive effects. Their conditions have progressively worsened, and their oppressors have become even more mercenary and brutal, and are also creating "facts", such as settlements in occupied land, which will be difficult to undo.

Why is it wrong for the Arabs and the Muslims to take the bit between the teeth and decide to wrench their rights by pressure or positive means? It is simply not true that there are at present especially hopeful signs about a possible solution to the Palestinian problem. Last year it was election year in the USA; next year will be the year of appraisal by the new Administration, and the following year no one knows what label it will get or what alibi the Americans will have for not grasping the matter, and the year after that will be pre-election year, then election year, and we are on the merry-go-round again!

The plain fact for the Arabs and the Muslims is that neither

the Americans nor the Europeans are willing in regard to the rights of the Palestinians to do what good conscience dictates. You say that this week the US State Department condemned the building of Jewish settlements on Arab land as "unhelpful". Is that all? Could they not find a stronger word for what is an utterly illegal act of aggression? And the EEC "initiative"; the Europeans say they are in favour of the PLO "being associated with negotiations". But cannot Europe find a more direct and cardinal role for the Palestinians in deciding their future, and why can't they stop talking at each other (like President Sadat and King Hussein) about this?

Yours faithfully,
MUSA MAZZAWI,
Polytechnic of Central London,
School of Law,
Red Lion Square, WC1.
January 29.

From Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad
Sir, Your leader's "Islamic negative summit" points rightly to the real interpretation of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, presented to the Muslims more than 90 years ago.

At the time the Muslims latched on to the idea that Jihad meant spreading Islam by sword, but Hazrat Ahmad had repeatedly mentioned in his books that Jihad did not necessarily mean armed struggle; it implies a general campaign or struggle. That God Muslims have now at last come to the right path.

Yours faithfully,
SHAUKH MUBARAK AHMAD,
Imam, London Mosque,
16 Gressehill Road,
Putney, SW18.

Historic interiors

From Mr John Harris

Sir, You publish (January 24) letters of concern for historic buildings, which prompt me to raise the issue of the absence of legislation to record by photograph historic interiors before dispersal of contents.

I first raised this publicly in 1953, since when the situation has remained unchanged. It ought to be the duty of the Secretary of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, but the RCHM has no powers to act and does not play an interventionist role. Any building that has survived with its contents is an entity, yet however historic can be destroyed by the simple act of transfer of ownership or sale by auction.

In theory, a great collection such as Holkham's could be so dispersed because no legislation exists to compel its owner to allow it to be recorded. It can be a chastening experience to browse through the RCHM and National Monuments Record's boxes of photographs to find hundreds of surveys of empty rooms, in many cases fully furnished only months before the photo-

grapher's visit. Three cases can be singled out as typical of about 300 in the past 25 years: the Spencer-Churchill collection at Northwick Park, Gloucestershire; the completely furnished Georgian kitchens at Castle House, Lincolnshire; and very recently the breaking up of the Gouthorn collection at Betchworth Park, Surrey—this last named perhaps the most intact, surviving, landed-gentry collection in southern England.

What is at stake is not necessarily high art of the Holkham sort, but episodes of social and artistic history important for an understanding of the country house interior and the way of life it witnessed. If an accusing finger is pointed to the RCHM or the auction houses or, indeed, the Victorian and Albert Museum, they can all be exonerated because no method of recording what are, in effect, private collections has yet been devised. It requires the cooperation of every one, and surely it is time an initiative was taken.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN HARRIS,
10 Limerston Street, SW10.
January 24.

Abortion law reform

From Mr John Smeaton

Sir, The report by Frances Gibb (January 14) gives a wrong account of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children's position with regard to reform of the present law on abortion when it states: "Another reason for MPs' unwillingness" (to promote amending legislation) "is that bodies such as the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children" are switching the focus of attention from a change in the law to ensuring its proper implementation, possibly through the courts".

The focus of SPUC's attention continues to be a tightening-up of the law so that those determined to drive a coach and horses through the present provisions would no longer be able to do so.

However, as we made clear to Mr

Sainsbury, who was most helpful, SPUC could not support a Bill which introduced a 22 or 20 week age-limit for abortion and which would, in effect, say that abortion on demand could be carried out up to the twenty-second or twentieth week.

Mr Sainsbury's proposed Bill, moreover, included a clause allowing the destruction of children of over 20 weeks' gestation for quite a marked number of reasons (thus giving the DHSS cast-iron reasons in law for doing nothing) and would result in an increase in the number of late abortions.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN SMEATON, General Secretary,
The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children,
7 Tufton Street,
Westminster, SW1.
January 15.

Childbirth at home

From Dr D. H. Garrow

Sir, Mrs Renee Short and Professor Knox Russell (feature, January 21) have been guilty of using statistics in a misleading way. The published figures of the Registrar-General's Census and Surveys refer to the place of birth and not where it was planned to take place. How many deaths occurred in premature babies whose mothers were booked for hospital confinement, but whose homes were so far away that they put off going in until it was too late?

In the High Wycombe district in 1977, 1978 and 1979 there were four neonatal deaths among 97 babies delivered at home, a neonatal mortality of nearly 40 a thousand, but all of them had been booked for hospital delivery. Among the remainder there were no deaths.

It is time for a controlled trial of healthy normal women who want to be delivered at home and for whom proper facilities, including blood in the fridge, professional expertise, home help and nearby hospital facilities are available. Half of them should be allowed their wish and half of them overruled and delivered in hospital.

With proper selection there should be no avoidable infant mortality in either group, but they could be compared in respect of length of labour, number of intervention procedures and analgesics given, and I would guess that those born at home would fare better and would certainly claim that they were happier.

I am, etc.
D. H. GARROW,
Consultant Paediatrician,
Wycombe General Hospital,
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

Jobs that count

From Mr Robert Adley, MP for Christchurch and Lymington (Conservative)

Sir, If the TUC claims that workers on short-time should be included in the unemployment statistics, will it want to put moonlighters and those engaged in the black economy on the other side of the current employment statistics?

Yours etc.
ROBERT ADLEY,
House of Commons, SW1.

Old campaigners

From Mr W. T. Wells, QC

Sir, Few of us, unfortunately perhaps, have Mr Levin's gift for satire, but while his article on the "Gang of four" (January 27) was excellent fun in its own way, it was in a political sense more than a little naive.

I do not know whether Mr Levin ever read Lord Wavell's lectures on generalship which, to the best of my recollection, were published by the Cambridge University Press about 1938. The point the field marshal made, amongst others, was that preparing a military campaign was in some respects like preparing a political campaign, and as to the requisites of this field marshal showed considerable insight which might perhaps be of interest to Mr Levin.

To lay the foundation for a political campaign it is necessary in the first place to obtain the support of a number of individuals whose political experience will make it unnecessary for the policies and aims of Mrs Williams and Mr Jenkins and colleagues to be spelt out in detail.

The time for a more widely publicised campaign for the enlightenment of Mr Levin and others will come later.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.
WILLIAM WELLS,
1 Gray's Inn Square,
Gray's Inn, WC1.

Timely reminder

From Mr P. H. Kemp

Sir, If nothing else the British are innovators. Mrs Kilbery (January 30) need have no fear that the coffin propped up in the entrance hall would cause concern, for the convertible coffin poses only a passing challenge to our national ingenuity. From cocktail cabinet to cloak cupboard the range is infinite.

Here the horologist comes into his own. With the sweeping sickle of the second hand and the automated hour-glass final, who can doubt that a convertible grandfather clock would prove to be the most popular and appropriate retirement present of all?

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK H. KEMP,
Round Hill Lodge,
Hockering Road, Woking, Surrey.

David Wood

A clearer voter's choice at last

There are times when we must treat politics as a deadly serious business, and now is probably such a time. But it is not altogether easy. Consider events during the past few days. One opportunistic opinion poll after another has shown that a social democratic party which does not yet exist were somehow to become allied with the Liberals, one of the smaller parties in the Commons, it would be swept into power on a landslide and leave the Conservative and Labour parties in cataclysmic ruins.

Nobody knows whether such an alliance can be formed, and Mr David Steel, the Liberal leader, has been running round in a desperate attempt to find out. Nobody knows on what policies, principles and platform the hypothetical alliance would be created. Nobody knows how many candidates the social democrats could deploy in a general election, how they would be financed, and what constituency organizations exist or will exist to bring the million-fold votes flooding into the ballot boxes.

Some things, though, we do know. A few of the nicest and most house-trained socialists in active politics have fallen out of love not precisely with socialism but rather with left-wing bully boys and intriguers who have seized the commanding heights of power within the Labour Party in the much abused name of democracy. Constitutional amendments carried at the 1

Telecommunications in the Arab world

In 20 years the evocative date of 2001 will have been reached, Robert Bailey writes. Sociologists and economists in the Middle East at that time may well look back and decide that the most significant regional events in the last quarter of the twentieth century related to telecommunication.

The full application of current technology is already evident in some Arab states. A foreign exchange dealer in the Gulf is able to view on a television screen instantaneously the same information that is available to his counterpart in London, Tokyo or New York. Elsewhere in the area, Saudi Arabia can boast of one of the world's most advanced telecommunications systems to improve telephone, telegraph and data links.

It represents massive investment as well as big business which shows no sign of slowing down. The fact that the second Middle East Telecommunications Show and Conference, now being held at the Exhibition Centre in Bahrain is 15 per cent larger than the 1979 event, illustrates the amount of international interest in the market.

Travellers in the Middle East can point to wide disparities in quality and complexity of present services. A businessman in Bahrain may be able to call his bank in Zurich from his car telephone. In contrast, the visiting executive in Cairo, more often than not, will find he cannot even obtain a connection across the city.

There are moves towards a more evenly-balanced and regionally cohesive telecommunications development. Overall in the region \$30,000m is expected to be spent on telecommunications in the next 10 years, but there is a need to get the best systems for the job and value for money.

The 21 member countries of the Arab League, with Ethiopia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Turkey, are linked in future network planning by the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

Since its formation in 1945, the Arab League has been the main unifying force in Middle East communications development. Through it the Arab Telecommunications Union was formed in 1958. The latter

aims to organize and improve its members' telecommunications through the ITU by standardizing systems, reducing tariffs, maintaining quality of services and encouraging cooperation among post, telegraph and telephone authorities. An Arab Broadcasting Union was set up in 1969, the result of which was the establishment of an Arab television news exchange in 1973.

However, the most significant cooperative step was taken nine years ago when several governments in the region requested financial and technical help from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to set up a regional network embracing the Middle East and Mediterranean basin.

The UNDP agreed to provide as much as 50 per cent of the capital for the project while the Geneva-based ITU has provided the technical assistance. Surveys working towards a master plan have had to consider a number of factors. These include the amount of traffic, location of national and international networks, economic and social development, transmission systems, switching, routing channels, broadcasting and data transmission needs.

In September, 1978, the master plan was approved by the sponsoring governments. These are grouped in six sub-regions with some countries included in more than one. The first includes Djibouti, Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the two Yemens. The second comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The third grouping includes Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Turkey. The fourth comprises Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Sudan while the fifth includes Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Libya, Malta, Turkey and Yugoslavia. The sixth is made up of Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia.

A feature of the master plan is that it is based on diversifying routing to increase reliability of net-

works. Though close collaboration is entailed, in a region not noted historically for cooperation, the potential rewards are impressive. Some 30 million further telephone lines and 300,000 extra telex lines are expected by 1990.

The master plan has been reviewed at ITU headquarters from January 26 to 29. Muhammad Mili of Tunisia, ITU's secretary-general, has given warning previously: "The situation of telecommunications is evolving at an extremely rapid pace with the result that, if the implementation contained in the master plan is not constantly updated, it is liable to become useless and irrelevant very quickly."

The plan is already being carried out. A microwave network was decided on by a meeting of countries in sub-region one, in Djibouti, in 1979. In 1980 surveys were carried out for microwave and submarine cable links between Safage in Egypt and Doha in Saudi Arabia. A route for microwave communications between Aswan in Egypt and Wadi Halfa in Sudan has also been investigated by ITU staff, while submarine cable connections across the Mediterranean were also studied in 1980.

The ITU estimates that \$3,000m, 10 per cent of the total investment, will be spent on just the international part of the network. When completed it will cover 28 countries and extend over 8,000km from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean and to the Black Sea.

While its smooth execution will do much to further Arab unity, the investment focus continues to be very much on purely national developments. Saudi Arabia has already started putting into effect plans to enhance its \$2,000m digital electronic telephone system, provided by L. M. Ericsson of Sweden and Philips of The Netherlands and managed by Bell Canada. Egypt, which is spending \$1,800m on rebuilding its antiquated telephone network, seems to have decided on analogue rather than the newer digital exchanges for its new system.

The contractors, led by Siemens of West Germany, do not rule out the possibility that at later stages of the Egyptian programme digital technology will be applied. The latter is, in telecommunications terms, the cordon bleu recipe for improvement. Whether areas

like the Middle East really need to buy the latest technology, when a previous generation of well proved and adequate equipment is available for the work, is a moot point.

Something that has been around for some time is microwave communications and it is playing a significant role in Middle East developments. Once again, the most spectacular application is seen in Saudi Arabia. The \$408m International Microwave Project, carried out by Western Electric of the United States and completed in 1979, extends over 6,200 miles.

Three hundred radio-relay microwave transmission towers have been erected the length and breadth of Saudi Arabia. The system provides 35,000 long-distance telephone circuits as well as telex, data and television channels. Another microwave communications link put into effect by Telettra of Italy has been put in between Jebel Dukhah near Taif in Saudi Arabia and Jebel Erba near Port Sudan. The 213-mile link across the Red Sea is the longest line-of-sight radio hop in the world. The newer telecommunications techniques have provided valuable assistance in a number of Arab developments. An American company, the AITech division of Cutler-Hammer's instruments and systems group, provided a \$17.8m traffic management system for the Suez Canal Authority.

The system involves placing Loran radio transmitters on ships as they start their passage through the canal. The device automatically determines its position by analysing signals from special Loran transmitters. Ships' movements are shown on display systems in harbour control offices. The transmitter is taken off the ship when it completes its journey through the waterway and placed on a ship going in the opposite direction.

Telecommunications technology is also important in airport developments. Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) uses an automatic reservations system linked to computers in British Airways' West London terminal. Circuits are provided on the Saudi Arabian telecommunication backbone network to provide data links to Saudia offices in Riyadh and Dhahran. The airline is also linked to Alitalia's maintenance and engineering management information system

(MEMIS) computer in Rome.

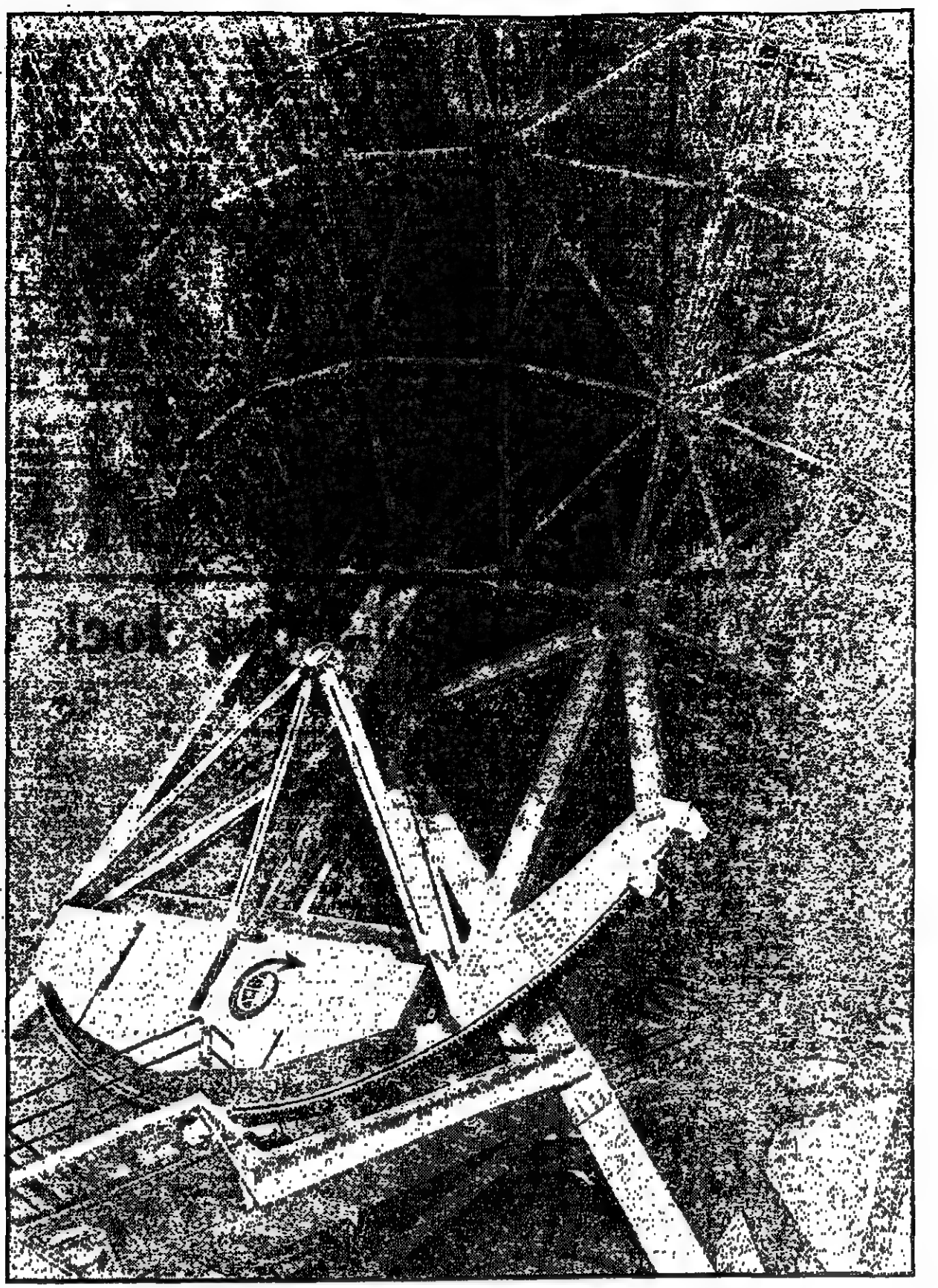
Data links are growing in importance in the region. Ten Arab airlines are planning to take part in a \$30m to \$40m Bahrain-based central computerized reservation system. The participants are Gulf Air, Saudia, ALA, the Royal Jordanian Airline, Kuwait Airways, Middle East Airlines, Syrian Arab Airlines, Libyan Arab Airlines, Democratic Yemen Airlines and Sudan Airways Corporation. The system is intended to handle 10 million reservations a year. The fact that such systems are being actively considered is a measure of how quickly telecommunications services are growing.

The long-awaited development of the Arab satellite communications project (Arabsat) will undoubtedly be a major spur to the exchange of information in the region. The ambitious project is intended to have two orbiting satellites providing telephone and television links for Arab countries. Much of the extended delay regarding Arabsat involves argument on who is qualified to supply equipment according to boycott rules and who will control the system.

Some consider that after all the bickering the main investor, Saudi Arabia, will at some stage take over responsibility for the whole project. Arabsat, apart from providing ordinary television, transmission links, could also be used to offer educational broadcasts to small rural communities. This is a necessary consideration as about 70 per cent of the entire population in the Arab world is illiterate.

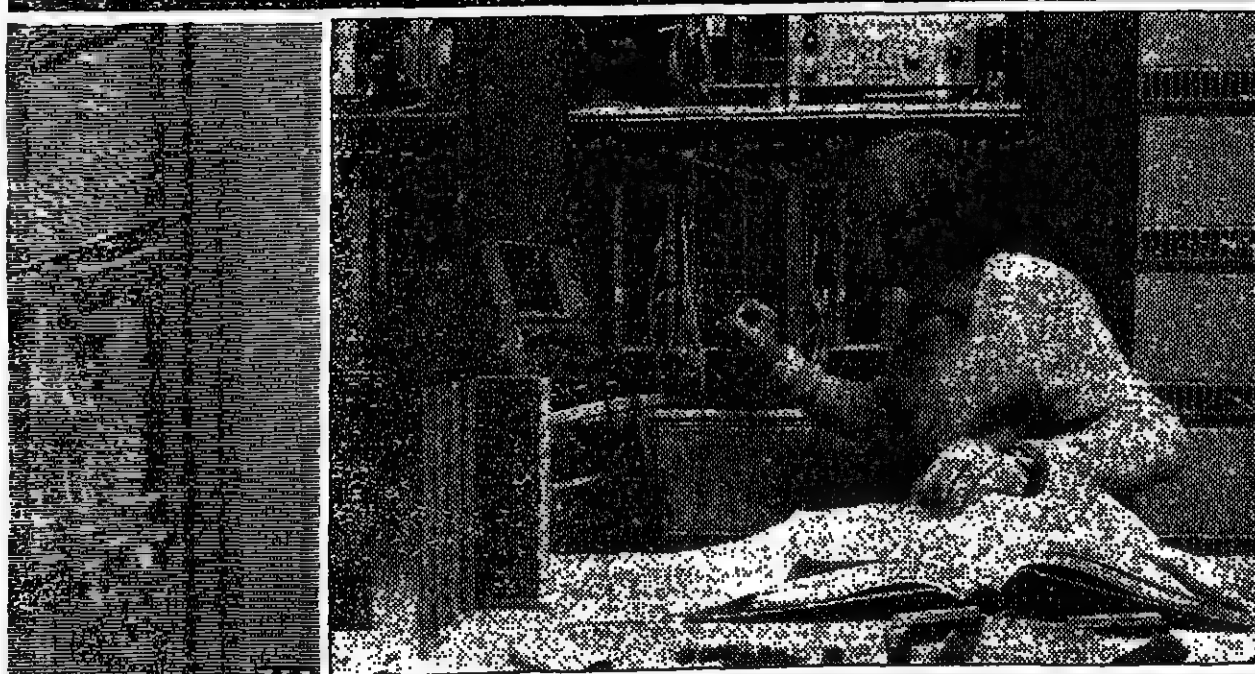
In any event television broadcasting continues to grow steadily in the region. A number of countries have a choice of two programmes and sometimes, as in Dubai, three. A few countries, such as Algeria, manufacture television sets. Most electronic items, both consumer and professional, are imported in the Middle East. Iraq, however, has plans to set up an electronics industry to make as yet undisclosed equipment. Syria is starting up a factory to produce E-10 digital electronic telephone exchanges under licence from CIT-Alcatel of France. Demands for technology transfer can only realistically be met when a country can

continued on page 19



Jill Brown

AXE: the facts and the future.



In the digital switching market, choosing a system may still seem a difficult problem. So many systems exist, so many of them are still in an early development stage—with little more than large promises to back them.

There is one system, however, which is rapidly becoming a world switching favourite—AXE, from Ericsson. A system so powerful, elegant and flexible that it has changed the perspective of most manufacturers and telephone administrations in the world. Today it is obvious that basic AXE features like functional modularity, software security and handling-cost minimisation are being recognised as fundamental requirements on modern switching systems.

Unparalleled success

In the short time since it was introduced, AXE has met with a success unparalleled in the history of telephony. More than three hundred exchanges with a total of three million lines have been contracted for 25 countries. In 13 of these countries, AXE exchanges are already actually in service.

Local production is established in six countries, and under way in a further seven—another measure of the successful development of AXE into a fully operational, manageable system, with comprehensive documentation and extensive support.

Towards the future

Such astounding success does not mean that the development of AXE is over and done with. On the contrary—it brings with it an obligation to protect the investments of our customers.

This protection is accomplished by a continuous development plan and a steady flow of added features and functions. The unique functional modularity of AXE means there is no end or limit to this process.

In fact, the uniquely effective AXE system structure allows for future advances in both component and system technologies.

A powerful digital group switch, for example, was incorporated in AXE almost from the beginning. Now, recent advances in component technology allow us to offer digital subscriber stages as well, completing the first major step in the long-term development plan of AXE.

Why not choose the best?

AXE is clearly ahead today, and its continuous enrichment makes it very difficult for any other system ever to match its advantages. In five years' time there will be just one better digital switching system than today's AXE—AXE with five years' enrichment.

The conclusion is clear: when there's a choice, choose the best.

The Ericsson Group



Telefonaktiebolaget
L M Ericsson
S-125 25 Stockholm
Sweden

Partners in telecommunications progress worldwide

Europe has edge in the market over US competitors

European companies have achieved considerable success in Middle East telecommunications markets during the past three years mostly at the cost of major United States rivals. This has been because of a variety of factors of which skilful marketing techniques, availability of advanced technology and probably political factors have been important.

The growing European competitiveness has been shown particularly by the success of Swedish, Dutch, French and West German companies. Since 1977 they have won the two largest telecommunications orders awarded in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

L. M. Ericsson of Sweden and Philips of The Netherlands together with Bell Canada were awarded a

turnkey contract to provide 70,000 additional lines for the Saudi Arabian telephone system in December, 1977.

Bell Canada's role is the training of Saudi staff to operate the new system and to maintain it in the interim period.

The negotiation of turnkey packages is often long and complicated, particularly in areas of the world where there is no previous example to draw on for the introduction of new technology. It is a problem felt by both the customer and the supplier.

Bidding for the Saudi Arabian TEP (telephone expansion programme) was not close. There was a difference of more than \$1,200m between the ITT-led bid of \$3,400m and the tender submitted by the successful consortium.

Another unsuccessful United States bid came from Western Electric which led a

United Kingdom group including Plessey, British Insulated Callender's Cables and Cable & Wireless. Its bid was costed at £2,942m. Bell Canada had to bid for its training and maintenance

contract against Western Electric and a consortium of United Telecommunications and ITT. The latter's bid reportedly was four times that of Bell Canada's.

Even though a letter of intent was only sent to the Dutch, Swedish, and Canadian consortium after its submission was evaluated by consultants from Arthur D. Little, Norconsult, Swedtel, Preece Cardew & Rider and the International Telecommunications Union, the loss of the order was a bitter defeat for the United States companies, notably ITT.

Its proposal was described by the consultants as "having been very thorough and good, but they did a lot of hedging, and their prices were high on training and maintenance".

Western Electric was awarded a \$408m contract in the same year against a rival Italian competition from Sirri, to provide a national microwave communications system. However, the fact

that the TEP contract was not awarded to a United States firm or consortium must reduce the chance of American companies regaining lost ground against the now well-established European-Canadian consortium.

The TEP contract has already been enlarged. At the end of 1980, 495,000 telephone lines had been added to the Saudi network. Some 300,000 working telephones are in operation, 140 per cent more than existed at the start of the programme.

According to Mr. Brian

Tickle, Saudi Telephones general manager, almost 7,000 Saudis are employed by the organization, representing about 63 per cent of all staff.

Saudi Arabia's third five-year plan includes further substantial development plans for telecommunications services. Another 480,000 telephone lines will be added to the national network, bringing the line capacity to more than a mil-

lion. Telex lines will be doubled to 30,000. The microwave network is to be developed as well as communications services with neighbouring countries. Together these plans are likely to mean as much or more capital investment as in the previous costly, but highly progressive five years.

The wish throughout the Middle East is to provide modern telecommunications systems. In marketing terms, however, nothing is clear cut. The carefully worded public relations statements record the achievement by one or another of the inevitable and usually unforeseen difficulties that arise in working in a developing country.

Salesmen in the international telecommunications market are expert at analysing any potential weakness, either technical or commercial, in a rival's position. It is not surprising therefore that companies are reluctant

to discuss their contracts in any great detail. This reticence, and the apparently continuing success of European companies over United States rivals, has been seen in Egypt. Responding to carrying out a \$1,800m programme to revitalize the Egyptian telecommunications system was awarded to a consortium led by Siemens of West Germany in September, 1979.

The news was widely acclaimed as a coup for the West German company. Siemens, Siemens Österreich and Thomson-CSF are to carry out a five-year programme involving the installation of 500,000 telephone lines which will bring the total network to 750,000 lines. In the first phase Siemens will install six exchanges in Cairo providing 120,000 lines and Thomson-CSF will supply nine exchanges with 80,000 lines for the Zagazig, Tanta and Mansoura areas of the Nile Delta.

Siemens, Siemens Österreich and Thomson-CSF are to carry out a five-year programme involving the installation of 500,000 telephone lines which will bring the total network to 750,000 lines. In the first phase Siemens will install six exchanges in Cairo providing 120,000 lines and Thomson-CSF will supply nine exchanges with 80,000 lines for the Zagazig, Tanta and Mansoura areas of the Nile Delta.

The contract awarded to the Siemens consortium was another that was plucked from under the noses of United States companies which had been widely expected to be the leader in Egypt's telecommunications improvement programme.

The financial package, a combination of Franco-German aid and guaranteed buyers' credit, was superior to that offered elsewhere. However, there seems to be some hedging over longer term plans by the customer, the Arab Republic of Egypt National Telecommunications Organization (Arento). As in Saudi Arabia, the country's initial development, while huge, may be only the precursor to future more valuable work.

Instead of demanding the latest digital electronic exchange equipment, Arento has specified well proved, but less advanced and presumably less costly, analogue

electronic switching equipment. In 1979 Mr. Ali Fahmi al-Daghastani, Egypt's Minister, said the telecommunications authority was determined not to become locked into one system.

It is an interesting comment since United States companies will inevitably become more involved in Egypt's overall telecommunications improvement by virtue of \$180m that has been allocated by USAID for this purpose. There is no connection with the Siemens exercise. However, Continental Telephone, which drew up a master plan in 1978 to improve Egypt's telephone system over a 20-year period, has, together with Arthur D. Little, a USAID-funded \$20.5m contract to supply managerial and technical advice to Arento.

It must be particularly galling for United States companies in North America and elsewhere not to have a

larger slice of the action than that provided for in the so-called "quick-fix" solutions to Egypt's telephone problems.

There is no guarantee that European firms and consortiums can, in the long term, maintain their present dominance in any part of the Middle East. American salesmen and their companies do not accept failure easily and the market for telecommunications in the region is too massive and potentially rewarding for any international company to withdraw from it.

That such powerful competition for orders is so firmly established between North American, European and Far Eastern firms, must be to the advantage of Middle East buyers whose technical ability to seek and demand value for money is increasing.

Robert Bailey
Middle East
Economic Digest

Round the clock watch maintained in secrecy

Talk of Saudi Arabia acquiring airborne warning and control systems aircraft (AWACS) would probably have been dismissed as a joke a year ago. Today, with the increasing desire (and a pressing need) to install modern defence systems, most types of equipment can be considered.

Modern armed forces are those which have the benefit of advanced technology. Application of such technology allows an integration of many complex systems which provide intelligence, firepower, logistic ability and above all communications.

The four AWACS aircraft the United States sent to Saudi Arabia shortly after the war between Iran and Iraq began last September, and which the Saudis went to buy, are providing round-the-clock surveillance of the combatants' aircraft movements.

A continuing difficulty faced by Third World countries when they acquire technologically advanced equipment is that of providing the trained men necessary for both operation and maintenance.

The essential weakness is often the inability to overhaul, repair and modify equipment and to make frequently needed spare parts. A lack of expert capability in handling modern military communication systems has been displayed by both Iran and Iraq during the present fighting.

At specialist events such as the British Army Equipment Exhibition up to 25 per cent of the equipment on show relates to some form of telecommunications and electronics. Most major electronics companies in the world have at least some military sales. The Middle East is a lucrative but intensely competitive market for exports. Because of fears of upsetting actual and potential customers few contracts are reported or discussed.

Before the revolution defence salesmen made Tehran the first stop on any regional itinerary. After the end of the Shah's regime attention has concentrated on Arab countries for defence purchases. That there are increasing in no small measure due to Iran's

changed, and as yet undefined, conception of its role in the region.

Many of the ambitious plans of the Shah, which on paper at least would have made Iran the dominant regional power, have been abandoned. One of the first acts of the revolutionary government was to cancel plans to acquire seven AWACS aircraft and to develop the multi-million dollar Irbex surveillance and communications system.

The war between Iran and Iraq has added to uncertainty in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states about their own abilities to defend themselves in particular against air attacks launched against oil installations on land and offshore. An integrated air defence system has yet to emerge in the area.

One important question is which countries would be included. It is technically feasible to link the radar systems of the various states which might wish to pool their resources. Radar used at airports for control of civilian air traffic often has military applications as well. Among several interna-

tional companies marketing radar, Plessey of the United Kingdom has been particularly successful in The Gulf. Kuwait, Ras al Khaymah in the United Arab Emirates and Sib in Oman are equipped with the company's 80 nautical mile range AR15 radar system. Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Dubai have bought Plessey's 200 nautical mile range AR5.

Saudi Arabia is the logical leader in any Gulf air defence system. Its nationwide air traffic control system is well advanced. This is being provided by Lockheed Alcatraz Corporation of the United States under a \$627m contract. Collins and ITT, also of the United States, are sub-contractors, as well as Marconi of the United Kingdom. Marconi is the primary supplier of radar for the development. Control centres are being established at both Jiddah and Riyadh; they will function in a similar way to the massive joint military and civilian air traffic control centre at West Drayton near London.

Some 3D radar has undoubtedly been installed in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere

in the Middle East. The 3D type is essentially a military radar system providing long-distance coverage of aircraft, including height as well as speed and bearing. There are several levels of complexity in military radar related to electronic counter measures (ECM) capability. One of the newest is the Marconi Martello radar system with a detection range of 300 miles at heights of 100,000 ft.

Westinghouse of the United States has supplied Saudi Arabia with three AN TPS 43 3D mobile radar systems, and an agreement disclosed in 1978 to provide Sudan with six of them under a \$78m contract. Another AN TPS 43 system has recently been dispatched to Saudi Arabia by the same company. The four United States AWACS aircraft. It is a lightweight and transportable radar system which can provide 3D coverage to a range of 240 nautical miles.

Saudi Arabia is now the main market for all types of both military and civilian electronics in the Middle East. A radio communications system, being installed by International Aeradio of

the United Kingdom, will eventually allow communications with any aircraft flying over the kingdom—as area the size of Western Europe.

Ground-based communications are also emphasized in Saudi Arabia. American company Litton Industries has a \$1,640m contract to provide a national communications system. Little has been revealed about the type of equipment to be installed or its purposes.

Much of the work involves improving the Armed Forces' military communications system, enabling it to be linked to the civilian network and airports. One \$73.5m sub-contract awarded to Aydin Corporation of the United States by Litton calls for the supply of tropospheric scatter microwave communications system.

Computer Science Corporation of the United States has a \$221m contract to supply a national computer information system. An official data bank will be built in Jiddah, Dammam, Bahra, Tabuk, Azra, Abha

and Taif. Another 700 subsidiary data links will enable any department of the Interior Ministry and the public security service to retrieve information from the central computer system.

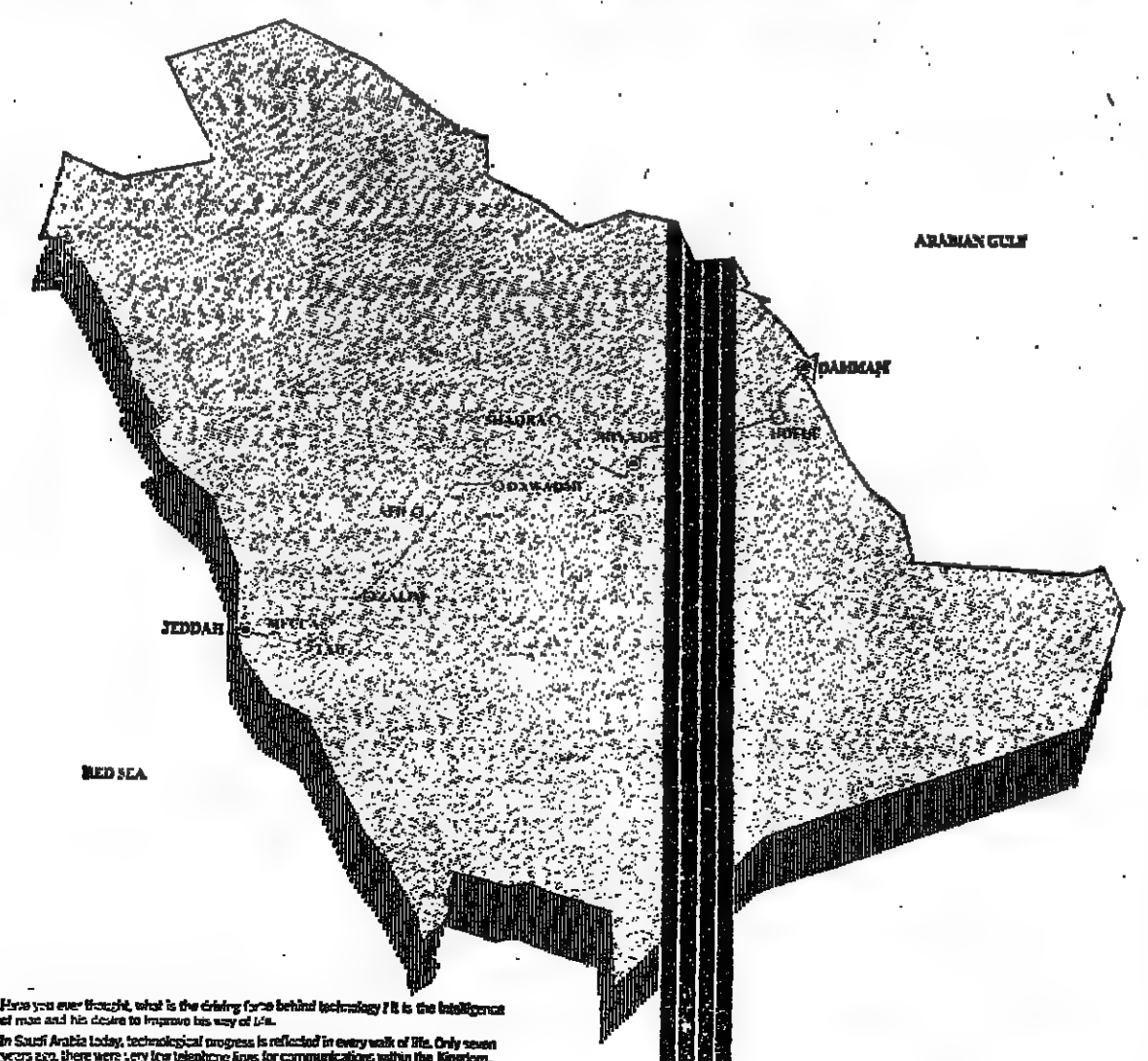
For the navy, the electronic warfare specialist company, Tracor of Texas, is supplying engineering support services for the American part of Saudi Arabia's big ships and training expansion programme. There are also important developments being carried out for Saudi Arabia's army and National Guard. The latter is a 35,000-strong force, recruited from tribes fiercely loyal to the regime, and charged with the defence of the capital, Riyadh, and the oil fields.

Early in 1980 the United Kingdom government agency International Military Services negotiated a contract worth an estimated \$225m for a group of British companies to supply artillery electronics support equipment to the Saudi army. Among the companies involved are Marconi Space & Defence Systems, EMI, Ferranti, Tellurimeter and Fairley Engineering.

Big investment in military communications is also being made elsewhere in the Middle East. The British company Racal was reported to be negotiating in 1980 a \$113m order to supply the Saudi Air Force with 12,000 units of UHF, VHF and single side band communications equipment. Plessey Avionics & Communications is believed to have an order worth \$60m to supply HF and UHF tactical radios for manpacks and vehicles for Iraq's army.

R.B.

Technology is our tomorrow.



Have you ever thought what is the driving force behind technology? It is the intelligence of man and his desire to improve his way of life. In Saudi Arabia today, technological progress is reflected in every walk of life. Only when you see them, you will realize the importance of technology in the region. Today, all major cities are connected through the direct dialling system.

SAI TELCO, Saudi Arabian Telecommunications Corporation, played a significant role in this achievement. It is the largest telecommunications company in the region. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system.

Today, SAI TELCO is the largest telecommunications company in the region. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system.

SAI TELCO is the largest telecommunications company in the region. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system. It has been instrumental in the development of the Saudi telecommunications system.

Sartelco
SART GROUP

Telecommunications.
Our experience.

JEDDAH RIYADH DAMMAM

سارتلكو

Advances in telecommunications technology are being widely exploited in the Arab world. To the particular advantage of industry and commerce.

The capability for information storage and data processing in the new generation of digital communication equipment; the improvements in telex equipment like the relative silence of electronic equipment; the readiness with which mobile, telephone networks can be operated (as already in Bahrain); the likelihood of videophone services becoming available later in this decade and offering a credible alternative to the personal contact so valued in Arab business relations—all these are examples of telecommunications expansion and technological advancement having an increasing impact on Arab business.

Another example is the increasing use of facsimile transmission, in which Muthair, the data transmission company of Beckenham, Kent, is involved. In dealing with business documents facsimile transmission not only eliminates the possibility of telex keying errors but can present an authenticated document complete with signature that the businessman receiving it can be sure of.

This has led to an increasing demand in the Arab world for telecommunications. According to Mr. Brian Tickle, Muthair's managing director, the telecommunications market is growing rapidly. More also want facsimile equipment with the security element of encryption equipment which "scrambles" the electronic data during transmission, ensuring security on confidential business information.

This is the rosy side of the picture for the role telecommunications is playing in Arab industrial and commercial development. But lack of the right telecommunications has had its debit side. Egypt's ramshackle telecommunications system on which it has been relying for action is at last being taken seriously. The chances of becoming the commercial centre of the Arab world when Lebanon's civil strife deposited Beirut from that position, Bahrain, then with the mature telecommunications systems in the region, are being taken seriously.

Terms of telephone, telex and other links, largely took on the Beirut mantle, with Kuwait—also well up in the telecommunications race—sharing particularly the growth of banking activity.

It is an illustration of how necessary are good telecommunications to a nation's industrial and commercial development. Local, regional

and international communications, both efficient and competitively priced, are needed as much by industrial companies as by service sectors—like tourism, banking, the stock markets and insurance.

War-torn Lebanon, as well as being beset with the aftermath of military activities, marked time in the telecommunications race, leaving Beirut with a big telecommunications backlog. This had to be tackled if it were to have any hope of regaining its place as a leading business and financial centre.

Lebanon now has plans for modernizing and expanding its telecommunications network, with France having given the country's Reconstruction and Development Council a \$53.7m loan for telecommunications work—benefiting mainly French suppliers, with recent orders for 22 electronic telephone exchanges going to the leading d'Electricité group.

There was also a World Bank loan to Lebanon last year of \$15m for repairing war damage to the telecommunications network. In the first quarter of 1980, 4,000 new telephone lines were installed, as many as were put in during the previous three years or more.

Altogether 30,000 new lines were installed in the 12 months to last August when four additions to Beirut's own telephone exchange were opened. Plans for this year include setting up international telex lines and semi-automatic exchanges for more than 9,000 lines in the Basrah area and 16,000 lines in the Shaboura and Zable areas.

Beirut will nevertheless not easily regain the commercial centre crown because there is a new drive for expansion in telecommunications among the oil-rich states. While Lebanon, without oil as well as its other problems, is getting outside aid so are other non-oil producing Arab states for financing the development of basic services, of which telecommunications are a key component.

The attempts of the oil-rich states to create an industrial base against the time that the oil runs out, after a period of idling which is adding to the need for better telecommunications.

Saudi Arabia's third five-year plan is notable for its commitment to press on with a modernization programme based essentially on rapid industrialization. Heavy industry schemes including several large petro-

chemical complexes, are due to start operating from 1984. But the new industrial cities of Jubail on The Gulf and the newly-opened Yanbu on the Red Sea.

Although Saudi Arabia has probably the most advanced telecommunications network of any of the Arab nations its third five-year plan to 1985 calls for nearly another 500,000 telephone lines—bringing the total to more than a million—with an extra 3,000 telex lines due to go in, bringing the total to 30,000 by 1985.

Development of telecommunications links with other Arab countries are also covered in the plan which should enhance facilities for pan-Arab business.

Industrial developments are proliferating in The Gulf now that investment spending is reviving after a few years of retrenchment which followed the overheating of so many Arab economies. In Abu Dhabi a number of large engineering projects in hydrocarbons are being pursued and in Oman there is a \$20,000m five-year plan which starts next January that will have a widespread effect on the local economy.

Communications, generally and defence, both involving telecommunications, get the biggest single allocations under the plan.

Even Bahrain, long declining as an oil producer and increasingly reliant on its expanding commercial, par-

ticularly banking, sector, has been attracting projects for petrochemicals production and iron pelletizing. An aluminium rolling mill, a participation project involving the Gulf states, will probably be situated in Bahrain.

The Iran-Iraq war appears to have had only a short-term damping effect on the drive to industrialization which is resuming in Iraq. Iraq's five-year plan 1985, with expenditure likely to reach about \$75,000m, will include setting up industrial plants to exploit the country's mineral wealth in gypsum, glass, sand, lead, iron ore and copper.

Telecommunications expansion has to go hand in hand with such developments. In Iraq France's Thomson-CSF has already won communications contracts valued at more than \$300m and another, worth about \$95m, is in the wings for setting up an electronics industry.

Oman's response has been to announce a five-year expenditure on telecommunications of more than \$182m which will not only substantially improve the telephone system but in the first phase expand a telex system that is particularly useful to industrial and commercial users. Businessmen will also be able to dial direct out of Salalah.

Algeria provides another example of the way telecommunications

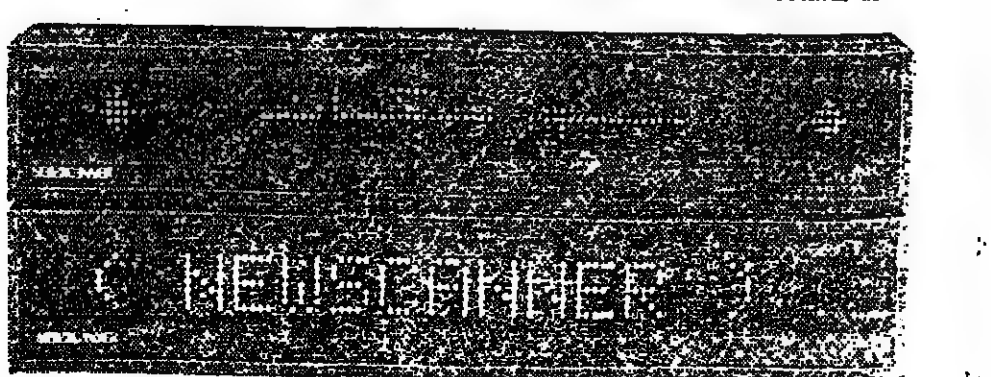
are expanding alongside other sectors. Government investment in industrial sectors there up to 1984 is running at \$57,000m while spending on telecommunications between 1980 and 1984 will be more than \$2,000m.

The much-needed rehabilitation, then expansion of Egypt's telecommunications network is finally proceeding under a 20-year plan that should bring the number of telephone lines in the country to 4,330,000, with expansion of telex and other facilities, at an estimated cost of \$18,000m. A \$1,800m contract, already awarded, will improve the existing telephone network. There are probably fewer than 400,000 lines compared with an estimated demand of 500,000 now lines, providing a network of 775,000 upgraded lines by 1984 when forecast demand is put at 1,500,000.

That will put Egypt at last on the road away from being perhaps the most frustrating place in the Arab world for businessmen needing the efficient telecommunications without which never expand in the way the Arab world will increasingly need.

Derek Harris
Commercial Editor

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Highly trained Saudi technicians maintain one of the most advanced telephone systems in the world.

You can watch Muppets in Morocco

One side-effect of the increasing impact of television in Arab countries—part of the way telecommunication is radically changing Arab lifestyles—is that visiting British businessmen can often count on catching up with the latest needle matches in British football. Although television programmes bought in from the West—largely the United States and Britain because of the second-language status of English in the Arab world—probably account for only 30 per cent of Arab television, programmes familiar to British eyes can seem comparatively frequent, from the Muppets to the BBC's Shakespearean series.

Most Arab towns are festooned with television sets, indicating a high-density usage which will undoubtedly spread into rural areas once links can get the television signals there.

The cultural and educational impact, already considerable, will probably be at its most dramatic in such communities.

Nearly every Arab now has a radio but, apart from this, television is often the only main form of entertainment for a 'mily group.

When the Arab Satellite Communication Organization

tion's Arabsat becomes operational even the most remote communities will be able to get, via small receiving stations, a wide range of programmes from news and entertainment to instructional and other educational programmes. Arabsat should also encourage more ready exchange of both television and radio material between Arab countries, a capability which the political optimism feel will help to ease some of the tensions between various Arab states.

Arabsat is planned to go into operation by 1984, and a decision is due on the prime contractor, with a number of bids of between \$100m and \$150m, still being evaluated, including one involving British Aerospace. The British company is in a consortium with France's Matra and Thomson-CSF.

In the same way that television is still largely available only in areas of large population density, the telephone network peters out rapidly outside the cities and towns even in those Arab countries which are in the van of telecommunications development.

Saudi Arabia's new five-year investment plans for telecommunications include not only an expansion of radio and television broadcasting but extensions of its so-called backbone coaxial cable system to the benefit of more rural areas and improvements to its domestic

satellite system. The satellite microwave system will bring many more rural areas within range of signals picked up on mobile stations, including border areas. Network capacity increases should get radio and television broadcasts to every corner of the kingdom, it is claimed.

Although Arabia, with its immense oil revenues, has been able to develop its communications at a pace that, best of any in the Arab world, comes nearest to meeting the needs of its people. The country's improvements in telecommunications have moved its telephone density sharply upwards. Yet it is still far behind the densities found in developed countries.

The number of telephones per 100 of the Saudi population was 2.4 in 1978 but could soon be about 10 per 100. The average for the Arab world is still little more than three per 100 compared with a world average of not much more than 15. Europe's 30 and the 80 to be found in highly developed industrial nations such as the United States.

Bahrain stands at about 22 per 100, Kuwait possibly 17, the United Arab Emirates over 20 and Qatar more than 15. But in Qatar, for instance, the number of telephones to each individual subscriber is as high as 20, indicating no doubt the wealthy Arab's appetite for telecommunications gadgetry.

Even oil riches will not easily increase telephone density levels to anywhere near those found in the highly-industrialized countries. One estimate is that it costs about \$2,000 for each new subscriber line installed in the Middle East, merely doubling the present density would cost well in excess of \$100,000m. Yet, according to some consultancy opinion, Arab investment in telecommunications services over the next 10 years is likely to be at most \$10,000m.

But drawing conclusions from these sorts of figures and the telephone densities statistics does tend to leave

out of account the structure of Arab society. Even a comparatively low-density service, provided it is spread geographically, can have disproportionate effects on lifestyles. In Libya, for instance, the densely populated industrial and commercial centres on the coast, notably at Tripoli and Benghazi, have attracted much of that population from the more rural areas inland. Those in the coastal strip have strong family links in the villages as much as 800 miles away in the desert.

Those family links are usually strong so that without any telephone contact at all there is a tendency to draw to the coastal strip more and more of that part of the family still in the hinterland. That could break up the essentially village basis of the Libyan way of life, which is why the Government is making it a priority to bring telecommunications links quickly into even the most remote areas.

Progressively telephone links to the rural areas, largely by cable, will be pushed out from the coastal strip and there are also plans for ensuring that television and radio programmes reach even the most remote communities. In this way it is hoped to keep the population spread throughout the country without particularly weakening the family tie.

Similar moves to keep remote communities within the mainstream of national life can be seen in most other Arab countries. As well as Saudi spending on this sort of expansion, Iraq has been let by the Transport and Communications Ministry for improving telephone services in rural areas. In Oman, under a five-year plan in under way to provide 24 fully automated exchanges and more than 22,000 new telephone lines, many of the facilities will be for the benefit of remote areas hitherto without telephone links.

The problems of providing small telephone exchange systems for remote commu-

nities could prove an opportunity for United Kingdom export sales especially to lesser developed Arab countries, according to Mr John Boag, general manager of British Telecom, the British Post Office consultancy service.

Although Britain's System X digital system—the GEC, Plessey, STC, British Telecom project—is primarily designed for highly-developed communities as in the industrialized countries, work is also going on to provide modern and economically operated installations for remote parts of Britain, particularly Scotland. The new systems, which can be self-repairing when faults occur, are particularly useful in reducing maintenance costs in remote areas.

The new digital telephone systems now being increasingly favoured in the Arab world will mean that many Arabs will be enjoying the additional facilities offered probably before many in already developed countries. System X offers more than 30 facilities for domestic users, from automatic redialling of temporarily engaged numbers and recording of one's incoming calls to another number to giving the subscriber a morning wake-up call or even voice guidance on steps needed to make, say, an international call.

However far improvements in telecommunications, especially in remote areas, foster domestic cohesion within each Arab country, it remains to be seen how far greater availability of television programmes especially will help the cause of Arab unity. Arabsat will tend to bring a narrowing of television programmes to within a country's geographical boundaries, but where other countries' programmes can be picked up there could be scope for any propaganda war to be conducted on screen as well as—as already happens—over the radio wavebands. Nevertheless the advantage of improved telecommunications for the individual Arab must far outweigh this possible debit.

D.H.

Middle Eastern markets lure Britain's manufacturers

Those prominent in the supply, manufacture and servicing of telecommunications equipment throughout the world will be exhibiting in Bahrain this week in the hope of acquiring a foothold in one of the most potentially lucrative markets in the world still free to open competition.

At least that is the theory. The Arab world, Africa, South America and parts of the Far East are the commercial jewels in the crown of the global telecommunications market being sought by most of the principal suppliers.

In theory the American market in telecommunications is open to any competitor but the commercial clout of companies can make it difficult for the smaller, more modest, operator.

The Japanese until recently have had no desire to allow their telecommunications equipment supply contracts in the public service industries to be open to foreign competition. A recent agreement between the

Americans and the Japanese may alter that balance but it is early days.

In Europe the markets have been controlled by the Post, Telephone and Telegraph Authorities (PTTs) of the respective countries. In Britain it is the Post Office, shortly to be split into Telecommunications and Posts and Giro.

The millions of pounds expected to be available in the Arab world as the countries develop their telecommunications are luring the world's manufacturers.

Saudi Arabia and Egypt are undoubtedly among the front runners in their efforts to modernize. Ericsson, Philips, Bell Canada and the nationalized telecommunications company have picked up multi-million dollar contracts in Saudi Arabia and Egypt recently.

Invariably the politics of a particular government can colour its view of foreign competitors in the Arab market. On the whole American and European manufacturers and suppliers have done well, among them being Cable & Wireless, the American company Western Elec-

tric, Cii-Alcatel, Thomson-CSF of France and Siemens of Germany.

British Telecom will be prominent among the British contingent in Bahrain. The corporation's consultancy service, EPO Teleconsult, over the years has been gaining a reputation overseas for impartial judgments on telecommunications, despite its association with the Post Office (British Telecom) and its 224,000 managerial and technical staff.

All aspects of telecommunications will be displayed by it in Bahrain exhibiting the expertise available from the British Post Office which covers all the activities needed effectively to finance, operate, develop and maintain one of the world's largest communications systems.

The corporation is marketing the export knowledge much needed in the Arab world, which has been gained by operating one of the world's largest telephones—26 million telephones, growing at the rate of a million a year—and supported by a staff of 120,000 engineers. British Telecom's emphasis

sizes that it will recommend non-British equipment if it is the best for the job.

British Telecom will be showing the products that it has developed with the British telecommunications equipment manufacturers among them GEC, STC, Plessey and Plessey.

The new digital exchange equipment of British Telecom—System X—inaugurated in the United Kingdom last September in a London exchange will be marketed by British Telecom's telecommunications Systems, a company jointly owned by British Telecom, Plessey, GEC and STC, the creators and manufacturers of the design.

Other Britons have high hopes, among them SIC showing general telecom equipment, Decca Radar exhibiting test devices for optical and conventional cabling, Marconi with general communications equipment, Hawker Siddeley showing power supplies, Racal Milgo with data communications equipment and the British arm of the Canadian company Mitel.

Bill Johnstone

Arabsat launch this decade

The sheer size of the Arab world makes it the ideal candidate to harness the technological advances being made in satellite and fibre optic communication.

The vast distances to be covered the extreme conditions in which the equipment is expected to function correctly and consistently, together with the provision requiring minimum maintenance, are all classic conditions in which to test the versatility of the new technologies.

The Arab states are no strangers to using satellites for communication. Throughout the Arab world—Addis Ababa, Djibouti, Aden, Khartoum, Jeddah, Riyadh, Dubai, Kuwait, Tehran, Baghdad, Damascus and Amman—among others—earth stations link the respective telecommunications networks to the Intelsat complex of satellites around the globe.

The International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (Intelsat) was formed in 1964. The first satellite was put into orbit over the Atlantic in 1965. Since then there have been several more put into geostationary orbit 22,000 miles above the earth.

The latest, Intelsat V, was launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida on

December 4 and provided the most advanced technology available in satellite communication linking the Arab world by way of the Intelsat network to the United States.

The programme has 10 satellites in orbit around the world in geostationary positions over the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. Three were launched in 1967, four between 1968 and 1970 and the remainder over the next decade.

But the Arab world is looking closely at the idea of using satellite communication for local or regional communication instead of transcontinental or intercontinental communication.

The latest project is called Arabsat—a satellite to be launched about 1984 by the Arab Satellite Communication Organization with a capacity for 17,000 telephone channels and a further eight for television transmission. The satellite will be substantially in size similar to Intelsat V, but with a capacity of 12,000 telephone channels and two television channels on simultaneous transmission. That satellite has twice the capacity of its predecessors.

About 1983-84 most of the European nations are involved in launching satellites from Cape Canaveral. In Florida on

among the prime bidders for the Arabsat contract, expected to be worth \$134m.

The European Telecommunications Satellite Council (Eutelsat), representing 19 European nations, plans to launch two satellites in 1983. These satellites will have facilities for private data transmission as well as a capacity for carrying 12,500 telephone circuits. The prime contractor is British Aerospace which has placed a bid for the Arabsat contract.

The French intend to launch a low-powered satellite in 1983 which could provide limited transmission facilities outside France. The project, called Telecom 9000, is its prime contractor, which has bid with British Aerospace jointly for Arabsat, along with Thomson-CSF of France.

The other bidders include Aerospatiale of France (involved in building Intelsat V), Hughes and RCA of the United States and SPAR Aerospace of Canada.

Optical fibre cabling is also likely to play a significant role in the future of all communication networks around the world but particularly in those countries like the Arab states where maintenance can be a problem.

This cable will replace

the copper coastal that now covers the vast distances between the major cities. Examples are Cairo to Djibouti, Aden to Jeddah to Cairo and Abu Dhabi to Aden. The fibre optic cable, although still at the test stage of its development, could provide greater transmission capacity without the need for signals to be reboosted.

The fibre is effectively a minute glass strand, about the width of a human hair, and has, at least in theory, an extremely large bandwidth. In other words the amount of information it can carry is substantially more than conventional cabling.

The minute fibre is able to carry several hundred times more information than a copper cable and can carry the signals further without much of the quality of those signals deteriorating. Copper cabling needs signal amplification every two to three kilometres, whereas an optical fibre can easily carry signals for 10km without the need for amplification.

In the case of countries where it is extremely difficult to gain access rapidly to conventional terrestrial cable routes, the economics of the satellite and the fibre optic can then be seen.

B.J.

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The Muppets are familiar to viewers of television in nine Arab countries.

Capitalization and week's change

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Began, Jan 26. Dealings End, Feb 6. Settlement Day, Feb 16

Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

(Current market price multiplied by the number of shares in issue for the stock quoted)

Stock		Price Ch'ge		Gross Div		Capitalization		Price Ch'ge		Gross Div		Capitalization		Price Ch'ge		Gross Div		Capitalization		Price Ch'ge		Gross Div		Capitalization	
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Hk, page 22

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Money
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6 month Euro 5 16 1/2-16 3/4
Friday's close

5m NEB plans aimed at small companies

Plans to establish a novel scheme aimed directly at small manufacturing companies have been submitted to Sir Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, by the National Enterprise Board.

The NEB intends to launch a scheme towards the end of this month and up to £5m has been allocated. If the scheme is approved by the Government, companies in England will be able to apply for up to £50,000.

Formulation of the new loans scheme is in line with the government's revised guidelines for the NEB.

The loans are designed to stimulate the growth of small manufacturing businesses particularly in the technology sector, and are aimed at higher risk projects.

Call for monitoring of EEC legislation

The Confederation of British Industry has called on the European Commission to monitor Community laws more closely and avoid imposing too many unnecessary laws and regulations. A CBI study, published today, supports membership of the EEC but is highly critical of the Community's performance.

British Aerospace shares will sell

British Aerospace is expected to have no difficulty in raising £50m cash from the sale of a large minority of its shares after details of the prospectus are announced at the end of this week. The group, at present entirely state-owned, is enjoying a buoyant period in its activities which include guided weapons, supersonic fighters, and business aircraft.

Triplex jobs cutback

Triplex, the toughened glass and windscreen company, is to make 600 people redundant over the next two years. The company, a subsidiary of Pilkington Glass, employs 700 people in Birmingham and 1,300 at its headquarters at Ecclestone, St Helens, Lancashire.

US to build Renaults

A tentative agreement has been reached under which Renault cars will be produced at the American Motors Corporation plant in Kenosha, Wisconsin, according to the United Auto Workers' union.

Soviet crop shortfall

The Soviet Union looks set for another mediocre grain crop in 1981, according to the International Wheat Council. Winter grain plantings in the USSR are officially estimated at 84.32 million acres against the target of 91.76 million acres.

Unctad gold plan

The establishment of a gold account for development, based on IMF gold holdings, is proposed in Trade and Development, the review produced by Unctad, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Iran debt lawsuit

Dresser Industries, a United States oil equipment company, has gone to court to have the unfreezing of Iranian assets declared unconstitutional.

More Venezuelan oil

Venezuela's oil production for last week averaged 2,187,000 barrels a day, a slight increase from the previous week. Production this year has averaged 2.3 per cent higher than 1980 levels.

Budget may shift taxation burden from industrial to financial sector

By David Blake
Economics Editor

A fundamental switch in government tax priorities is now under consideration for the next Budget. Ministers are believed to be considering a switch in taxation which would benefit the industrial sector at the expense of financial and corporate parts of the economy.

At the same time a cut in interest rates is thought to be under consideration.

A drop in interest rates is likely to be one of the subjects raised at a meeting between the Prime Minister and Sir Geoffrey Howe, representing the Committee of London Clearing Bankers, later today. Mrs Thatcher is known to be highly critical of the part which the clearing banks have played in expanding the money supply over the past 12 months.

The Prime Minister has not forgotten the role which the banks played in allowing the average wage rates to rise significantly during 1979 and 1980. She is thought to be particularly aware of the knock-on effect which this had on public sector pay.

There is also the problem of clearing bank profits, which are thought to be particularly significant in the light of the high nominal interest rates which now prevail.

However, such problems still are thought to leave a "wind-

fall" tax on bank profits as no more than an even bet. The widely varying profit performance of each of the four clearing banks is one contributory factor.

So too is the fact that all of the clearing banks have played their part in supporting the manufacturing sector over the past few months.

This means that the auditors have built up a pattern of support for industry which could call into question the validity of their apparent profit figures.

Within the Government, there has been an unusual role reversal on how to deal with the banking and financial sector.

The Bank of England has taken a strong line in favour of the clearing banks, arguing that they have defended the interests of industry. At the same time, it has belittled the banks into supporting industrial companies.

On the other hand, ministers traditionally thought of as being right wing, such as Mr Nigel Lawson, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, have argued for higher taxes on banks.

They argue that the policy of holding down inflation through tight control of the money supply involves a "windfall" profit for the banks through high interest rates.

Such profit is thought to be equivalent to the profits earned from the North Sea by oil companies which benefit from oil price rises in which they play no part.

Italy curbs credit to defend currency

From John Earle,
Rome, Feb 1

Italy has announced a series of credit restrictions to defend the lira against mounting pressures.

The currency is under the strain of an estimated \$19,000m (£7,317m) trade deficit for 1980, the highest inflation in the European Community at over 21 per cent, and a steady slide in the dollar exchange rate which on Friday crossed the psychological barrier of 1,000 lire. Sterling also closed at a record 2,389 lire.

The Treasury Ministry and the Bank of Italy announced that with effect from March foreign borrowings to finance imports must not surpass the foreign exchange borrowing limit.

A 50 per cent non-interest bearing deposit with the Bank of Italy, at the exchange rate obtaining on December 31. Foreign exchange borrowing to finance exports however will be exempt from the limits.

In 1981, credit expansion in lira must not exceed 12 per cent. The Bank of Italy will continue with the present system of monthly ceilings on domestic credit expansion, rising from 2 per cent at the end of April (over December 31, 1980) to 12 per cent at the end of next December.

Altogether, the authorities are prepared to allow a 13 per cent rise in both lira and foreign currency lending this year.

Senator Nino Andreatta, the Treasury Minister, said that the measure was necessary to defend the lira against mounting pressures.

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Unions and CBI seek industry boost

By Patricia Tisdall
Management Correspondent

Fresh efforts to persuade the Prime Minister and her Cabinet colleagues to ease economic controls will be made this week at a meeting of the National Economic Development Council.

Wednesday's meeting, with Mrs Thatcher taking the chair, is to resume the three-way discussions on macro-economic matters which began shortly after the present Government came into office. Papers from the CBI, the TUC and the National Economic Development Council will be considered each of which expresses acute concern about erosion of the industrial base.

TUC leaders are expected to call for an injection of over £50,000m of public funds as an immediate step towards industrial recovery. Union proposals will be spelled out fully in the TUC's annual economic review, which is to be published later today. These will include a support package for private industry as well as increased spending on public sector investment projects.

In debating their case, TUC leaders are expected to stress the impact of present policies on unemployment and the necessity to prevent jobless

totals from rising further. TUC projections are that a continuation of present policies would lead to a further one million people out of work during the next 12 months while even a stimulus of £5,000m would only hold unemployment at its present level.

While there is no question of a formal alliance against the Government there is agreement between the CBI and TUC leaders that some alleviation for industry is needed. The strategy document initiated by Sir Terence Beckett, the CBI's director general, will not be published until next month. However, the changes industrialists believe are needed in the short term are catalogued in pre-Budget submissions to be published tomorrow.

The CBI, while supporting the overall drive against inflation, wants a further immediate cut in interest rates. It also wants a reduction in the employer's National Insurance surcharge, which it regards as a payroll tax; help on energy costs, and measures to encourage investment. Above all, CBI leaders are expected to stress the adverse impact the high exchange rate is having on industry performance and profits.

Unless British industry can compete internationally, the



Sir Terence Beckett: seeking further cut in loan rates...

CBI argues, it will not be able to generate enough profits to increase investment and create employment. There are also considerable fears among industrialists that the shakeout in labour and companies during the past year has caused an irrevocable long term damage.

CBI leaders are conscious that their members could do more to help themselves, but argue that the benefits will take time to show. Sir Raymond Penock, the president, who as well as Sir Terence will be present

at Wednesday's meeting, said last week that "setting the economic balance right is essential if we are to get business moving out of the present rut of recession. But that does not remove the onus from us to make ourselves more efficient".

This will be the first formal meeting between Sir Terence and the Prime Minister since an interview immediately after the CBI's national conference. Sir Terence's promise of a "bare knuckle fight" in his closing speech led to several resignations from the CBI, publicly exposing the split between industrialists who do not want the Government to ease the monetarist clampdown and those who feel it has already been held for too long.

Sir Terence and Sir Raymond will need to convince Mrs Thatcher that they represent the views of the majority of industrialists on Wednesday. Though radical policy changes are unlikely, the Prime Minister may be prepared to make modifications to meet some of the employers' demands on issues such as energy pricing and incentives for new research and development projects.

A powerful influencing factor may be the arguments put up by the NEDO for "positive adjustment" policies and selective aid to industry, particularly in high technology areas.

Norwegians press for separate gas pipeline

By Nicholas Hirst
Energy Correspondent

Norway's state oil company, Statoil, is putting strong pressure on the Norwegian Government to agree to its plan to develop a gas-gathering pipeline system independent of the 22,000m project planned to link 12 fields in the British sector of the North Sea.

The partners in Statoil, the largest Norwegian oil field which has extensive associated gas reserves, have decided to recommend a pipeline system which would deliver gas to petrochemical production in Norway and dry gases for commercial, industrial and domestic heating to a terminal at Emden in West Germany.

But the plan involves pipelines crossing the deep Norwegian trench, an expensive and technically complicated operation which would be avoided if the Norwegian gas was sold to the British Gas Corporation and delivered to Britain.

Despite relatively high recent offers for Norwegian gas,

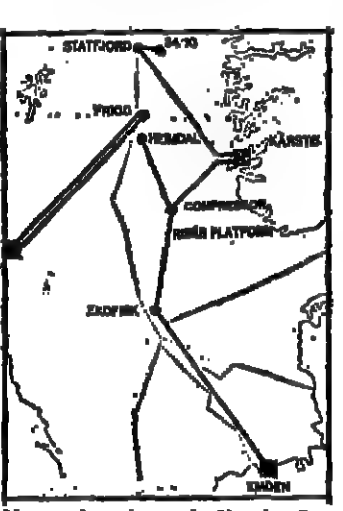
British Gas's reputation as a "misery" monopoly buyer has discouraged the Norwegian consortiums from delivering to Britain and encouraged them to pursue contracts with a gas-hungry Europe.

Initially the Norwegian pipeline is planned to collect gas from the Heimdal and Statfjord fields and the gas associated with oil in the so-called "golden block" 34/10. Partners in the Heimdal field, which contains mostly dry gases are like the Statfjord partners pressing for an all-Norwegian system.

Together the three fields would deliver 8,000 cubic metres per year to a terminal at Karsto on the Norwegian coast.

The British scheme is now estimated to cost twice as much, and as it is to go ahead at the same time as the Norwegian plan, would create intense pressure on pipe and other manufacturing.

A link between the two systems is likely to be agreed, giving both sectors flexibility in marketing the gas, but there



Norway's planned North Sea gas pipeline.

can be no doubt that there is strong disagreement on the British side that most of the Norwegian gas looks likely to be landed on the Continent. The addition of the Norwegian supplies to the British system would have greatly improved its economics and would have eased the problems of meeting future demand.

The British scheme has proved far more difficult to finance than was originally planned.

Move to inject cash into BPC

By Philip Robinson

Mr Robert Maxwell, director of BPC, in which he has a 29.5 stake, is expected to meet officials of the National Westminster Bank this week to discuss arrangements involving fresh capital being injected into Europe's largest printing group.

Both sides confirmed last night that discussions were at an advanced stage, but would not say whether the package would include Mr Maxwell's private Penguin Press publishing empire taking convertible loan stock or shares, or whether it might convert some of the overdrafts into BPC equity.

Mr Maxwell now has an office in BPC's headquarters and is working closely with Mr Peter Robinson, BPC's chairman.

City speculation is that, if Mr Maxwell is successful, he could take BPC into private ownership and perhaps return later with a combined BPC-Penguin Press for a full Stock Market quotation.

Dupont to press case on steelmaking crisis

By Peter Hill
Industrial Editor

Talks crucial to the survival of an important part of the independent steel industry will take place tomorrow at the Department of Industry.

A senior representative of Dupont, the Midlands steel and engineering group, and Radcliffe, the Loughborough steel making group, will emphasize to Sir Keith Joseph, the Industry Secretary, the gravity of the situation facing private steel makers catering for the engineering industry.

Both companies, together with Round Oak, the steel company owned jointly by the British Steel Corporation and TI and GKN figure in draft plans drawn up by Sir Keith's department for rationalization of the engineering steel sector which would also embrace the BSC's operations in the same market.

Codenamed Phoenix Two, discussions on this venture have made considerably less progress than those on Phoenix One, the rationalization plan which

would bring together the steel mill, bars and wire rod facilities of the BSC and GKN in a joint company. Its formation may be announced by GKN later this week.

Phoenix Two faces serious problems. Sir Keith is anxious to refer to discussions aimed at eliminating the areas of overlap between the public and private sectors in the engineering sector when he announces the Government's decision on the BSC's corporate plan later this month.

Dupont, whose half-year losses were £4.7m and which according to City estimates has been losing about £1m a month since the recession began, has been the subject of persistent speculation. Last week its share price fell to an all-time low of 7p from 12p. The group is capitalized at £294m. Last month the Bank of England became involved in discussions between the company and its bankers.

Dupont has steelmaking facilities at Llanelli in south Wales and in the Midlands.

Ministers unlikely to outlaw price fixing

By John Huxley

Ministers are expected to decide soon whether to introduce legislation which would make collusive tendering—otherwise known as price fixing—illegal.

Indications are that they may finally be won over by arguments that to do so would reduce the authorities' success in detecting collusion by deterring would-be informants.

The subject has been under consideration by this and previous governments, and was discussed in a consultative document published by Mrs Sally Oppenheim, Minister for Consumer Affairs, last July.

Collusive tendering is the practice whereby companies or individuals bidding for work agree beforehand which of their number shall win a contract and structure their tenders accordingly.

In the past it has proved difficult to detect. Arrangements are made in secret and written records are unlikely to be kept. As the consultative document made clear: "Evidence is unlikely to come to light unless a party to the arrangement or a disgruntled former 'would-be' party decides to break rank."

The Government accepts that collusion strikes at the roots of fair competition, and may be objected to on both economic and ethical grounds. "On an economic level it entails a loss of economic efficiency and a financial burden on the consumer, ultimately the consumer or taxpayer. On an ethical level, it involved deception for financial gain", the consultative paper states.

At present collusive tendering is covered by restrictive practices law which requires that any such agreement be registered with the Director General of Fair Trading. It is



Mrs Oppenheim: general review promised of legislation.

open to those affected by the operation of the laws to seek civil damages, but no criminal penalties follow from failure to declare and register agreements. It has been found that the pursuit of civil damages is both time consuming, expensive and uncertain in its result.

Pressure to make collusive tendering a criminal offence has grown in recent years, largely as a result of restrictive practices in the construction industry and in the supply of electrical and mechanical services and telephone cables.

As the consultative document says: "Whether the practice is a stock or chicken, it is a crime. What is certain is that it has not died but shows no signs of doing so."

Apart from problems over definition, the Government believes there is a risk that detection would become more difficult if it became a criminal offence, as this would deter would-be informants.

Mrs Oppenheim has already suggested collusive tendering should form part of a general review of restrictive practices legislation. It is likely that she will decide to tackle the problem by strengthening the powers of the Office of Fair Trading.

New Treasury chief set to cut taxes for the rich to help the poor Man in a hurry to change US economy

Mr Donald Regan, United States Secretary of the Treasury, is in a hurry to launch an era of economic conservatism. He is determined to shake up what he views as an economy "stuck in the mud".

Mr Regan has been in office for just over a week. Already, he has held many budget meetings, testified before Congress, made key departmental appointments, talked at length with the press and booked February 10 for a major speech to the National Press Club.

It is not vanity and the quest for power alone that drive Mr Regan now and made him decide to give up the chairmanship of Merrill Lynch, the brokerage conglomerate. He took his new post out of deep conviction that drastic changes were needed in United States economic policy and that his doctrines must be given a try.

He asserts that he is a pragmatist, but every sentence he utters underscores the depth of his capitalist conviction. He readily admits that the Reagan administration's attitudes fall closely into line with the views espoused by Adam Smith over 200 years ago. "We are free market people," he declares.

He makes every opportunity to talk of the hardships of capital gains tax and the need to cut the rate down to 20 per cent from the present 28 per cent. When income tax is discussed, he first turns to the need to chop the very top levels. He sees absolutely nothing unfair or inequitable about his tax approach that will pro-

vide far greater cash tax reductions to the wealthy, than to people on low incomes. Savings must be increased and those most able to, save the big tax cuts.

The reductions in capital gains tax will stimulate venture capitalists, strengthen the equity markets and promote private investment. Such views unsurprisingly come from a man who found fame and fortune on Wall Street.

Mr Regan is not an uncaring or uncompromising man. He simply believes that the poor can best be helped by stimulating economic growth through bigger private investment and far less governmental management of economic affairs. The rewards for cutting welfare payments and United States budget and greater chances for private companies to borrow more funds for productive investment.

Unashamedly the Reagan administration, through Mr Regan and the budget director, Mr David Stockman, is going to campaign ruthlessly on behalf of the trickle-down theory. Increase the size of the cake on the table of the entrepreneur and the workers will obtain a few more crumbs.

The same approach guides international affairs. The argument that will be made soon for sharp cuts in foreign aid will be that this, over time, will help poor countries, because the budget savings in the United States will produce a healthier world economy, where all nations will prosper.

It remains to be seen whether Congress will buy the program so long advocated by the *Wall Street Journal* and now being fashioned by Mr Regan. The new policy statements may well read like the *Journal's* leading articles now that Mr Regan has appointed Mr Paul Craig Roberts, a former *Journal* editor, as Assistant Treasury Secretary for Economic Policy.

The new Treasury chief did not give up the comforts of Wall Street for the public office without deep thought about his chances for winning. He means to cut public spending and tax rates and get the economy moving. America must "bite the bullet," he told a congressional committee, adding that "come hell or high water," the budget deficits will be eliminated.

Right now Mr Regan's sole preoccupation is domestic economics. Sort out the mess on the home front and tackling global monetary and trade and investment issues will be much simpler. He played a leading role in developing Merrill Lynch's large international operations and he is perfectly at ease talking about Eurocurrencies and Special Drawing Rights.

He will make his mark on the foreign front later, for now he and the Reagan administration intend to have a full-scale budget programme, covering this year and next year, before the Congress in less than three weeks.

Frank Vogl
in Washington

Sharp rise in US spending makes Reagan task harder

By Our United States
Economics Correspondent

Washington, Feb 1

The Reagan Administration's task of balancing this year's United States Budget has been made harder by recent sharp rises in public spending. New data compiled by the congressional budget office show that outlays will total at least \$650,000m (£279,660m) rather than the \$630,000m expected when the last session of Congress ended in early December.

The swift rise with which the public spending total in the United States is rising has prompted President Reagan to declare that the Budget is now out of control.

About one-third of the increased spending estimate, totalling \$10,100m, is owing to increases in outlays caused by specific additional spending programmes, but fully \$15,100m of the gain in spending is accounted for by changes in economic conditions and other developments that Congress has little control over, the budget office said.

The catalogue of sudden boosts in spending is long and it makes it look most probable that the deficit for this fiscal year will be well over \$60,000m and that the \$650,000m spending total now being used by the budget office may well be increased.

OUT **IEA** TODAY

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THE POUND			
	Bank	Bank	Bank
	buys	buys	buys
Australia \$	2.13	2.04	12.80
Austria Sch	37.00	35.00	12.80
Belgium Fr	85.00	79.50	2.05
Canada \$	2.92	2.84	195.50
Denmark Kr	16.00	15.30	16.50
Finland Mark	9.90	9.45	4.49
France Fr	11.00	11.49	2.37
Germany Dm	5.38	4.95	84.00
Greece Dr	125.00	115.00	
Hongkong \$	12.95	12.35	
India Rupee	1.38	1.33	
Italy Lir	2495.00	2385.00	
Japan Yen	513.00	487.00	
Netherlands Gld	5.62	5.38	

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

David Hewson

Trustee Savings Banks in a hurry

Long ago the sort of Dutch auction now developing for United Dominions Trust would have looked decidedly touch with reality.

Seared and heavily dependent on not borrowings to finance the hire-purchase business, almost anyone bold enough to take on UDT, with its immediate touch with reality.

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However this fairy-tale ending has obscured—or allowed everyone to conveniently forget—the issues of principle behind the tangled tale of dawn raids, strategic nominee shareholdings and a bidder hiding behind a Hongkong company.

The first twist to the tale was the accumulation of a 22.5 per cent shareholding in Renwick by six nominee companies. Behind the nominee companies lay the Uto Bank of Zurich, holding the shares for six "unrelated" clients all with roughly equal shares. The Takeover Panel's view was that there was no evidence they were acting together.

The Uto shares were bought through A. J. Bekhor who also turned out shortly after to be acting for Kangra International, the Hongkong company which through a raid and a series of market purchases soon had nearly 30 per cent of Renwick.

The Takeover Panel was assured that Kangra and Uto, whose combined holdings were over 50 per cent, were not acting in concert. However, the identities of the ultimate beneficiaries remained unknown.

After repeated attempts, Renwick finally met Kangra for the first time. During the course of that meeting Renwick was told that Uto's clients had accepted a proposed 55p a share bid from Kangra. Control of Renwick was in Kangra's hands and there was nothing anyone could do about it even if they had wanted to.

Of course the price finally paid for Renwick seems a good one but the way in which control was acquired leaves much to be desired. The Takeover Panel, furthermore, faced with these nominee shareholdings seems to have been less than effective.

True, the Panel seems to have been satisfied with the assurances that the nominees and Kangra were not acting in concert, but the fact that Renwick was never in a position to mount a defence until it was too late, and that other Renwick shareholders are unclear as to why their company was taken over, is hardly a satisfactory state of affairs.

Investing in oil ... and avoiding some risks

Here at last ... the oil and gas fund for widows and orphans. At least that seems to be a view of Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank handling the offer for sale of shares in Oil and Gas Production, a Guernsey-based dollar-denominated investment vehicle.

The new company will use the cash raised, £8.7m initially, to invest in onshore drilling projects in the United States. But unlike so many of its predecessors, OGP will only buy into fields with sound production records and assuming no disasters—a cast iron stream of revenues.

Hence investors can take what ought to be, at least, an inflation-proof stake in energy without exposing themselves to the huge, downside risk inherent in pure exploration ventures.

The new company has already paid out \$11.2m to purchase a working interest in one field partly to satisfy Stock Exchange listing requirements which disallow all-cash companies.

And shareholders successful in application for stock can presumably look forward to a run of cash calls as OGP finds further suitable opportunities.

Expectations must be that oil and gas prices will at least keep pace with inflation and probably outpace it, particularly in the case of gas if the United States authorities decide to de-regulate soon. But of course shareholders have to put their faith in the OGP team's ability to buy working interests at the right price in what is a very competitive auction.

With 72 per cent of the issue already promised mainly to clients of Guinness Mahon and brokers James Capel there could be a scramble for the little stock remaining, while the stage is likely to be attracted to part of the offer which is for partly paid shares.

But given the current fashion it is hard to imagine that more traditional investors will not be confronted with similar opportunities if this one succeeds.

On Wednesday one of the most blatant restrictive practices in British business will be tested and found wanting.

Whatever the result of a meeting of the Association of British Travel Agents (Abta) appeals committee on that day, it seems that Abta cannot win.

If the committee decides in favour of its own powerful retail agents committee, Mr Gordon McNally, chairman of Britain's third largest travel agency company, Exchange Travel, promises to take legal action against the trade organization.

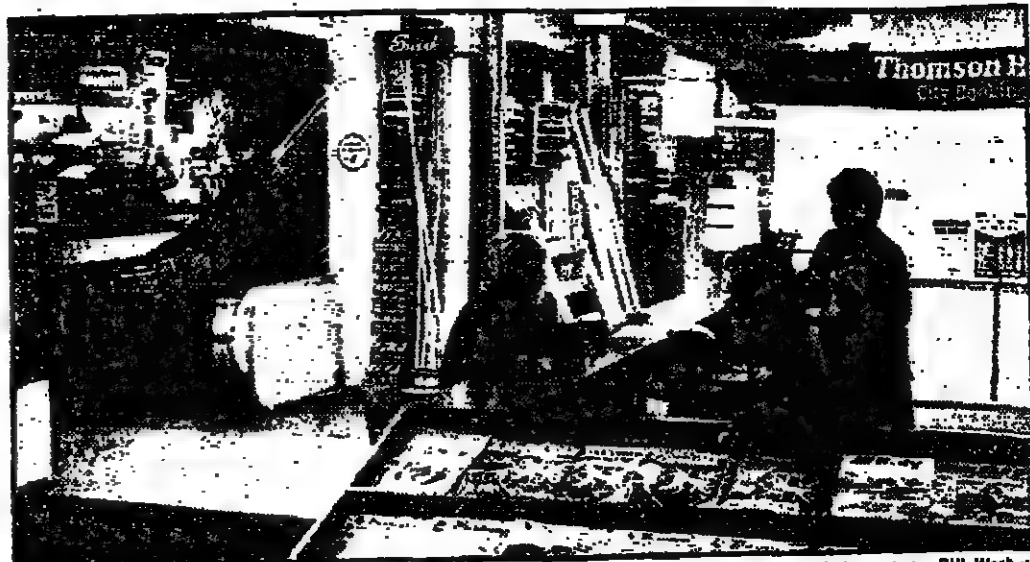
And if the appeals committee supports the flamboyant Mr McNally, most High Street travel agents will see the decision as a further diminution of their favoured role in selling the country's package holidays.

What is at stake, if Mr McNally loses and pursues his case in the courts, is the legality of Stabilizer, the restrictive practice agreement entered into by Abta, the major tour operators, and the Government 16 years ago.

No one denies that Stabilizer is a restrictive practice. It stipulates that the holidays of the members—mainly British tour firms and many of the minor ones—may only be sold at the retail level through Abta agents.

In return, Abta undertakes to police a series of consumer protection measures from handling schemes to guaranteed standard staff levels. In 1965, the era of unfinished Costa Brava hotels and short-lived tour operators, such guarantees were welcome. Whether they still are is a moot point and one which the Office of Fair Trading has already decided to test against Abta in the Restrictive Practices Court, probably next year.

Battle of the travel shops



The Exchange travel shop in Debenhams, Harrow: the company intends to have 70 such shops open in the stores chain by June.

The problem of Exchange Travel is likely to prove much more pressing. The company has opened 30 travel offices in Debenhams stores around the country since last autumn and is to extend the chain to 70, in a £2.75m programme to be completed by next June.

Exchange applied to Abta for registration of 13 of the stores.

Unfortunately for Exchange, its applications went in at about the same time as Abta had to reach a decision on another controversial issue. P & O had applied for approval of a scheme to run travel offices from the premises of Radio Rental television hire shops.

The P & O proposal goes to the very heart of the retail travel agent's nightmare: the extension of travel sales facilities into retail establishments, be they supermarkets or private job agencies.

Abta's membership committee turned down both Exchange and P & O, though on different grounds. P & O was told that its scheme infringed Abta's restrictions on mixed business premises.

Mr McNally of Exchange Travel says that he has never been given a reason for refusal but understands from reports in the trade press that the membership committee disliked the layout of his offices.

Travel departments in retail stores are not new, but Abta has always insisted that they should operate separately from the store's other retailing section, and look as much like a traditional High Street travel agency as possible.

Exchange's Debenhams ventures involve counters with sales staff behind them, similar to the arrangement in traditional retail stores. But this element of separation was

apparently not enough for the retail agents on the membership committee.

The gap between what Exchange wants on lay-out and what the retail agents would be prepared to accept is probably small but clouded by the scope of Mr McNally's plans.

The issue has divided Abta staff from sectors of the retail membership, with some staff believing that the association has taken on a battle it cannot win.

P & O submitted its application only after preliminary discussions with Abta full-time officials which led to the belief its scheme would be approved. The P & O bid has not yet been rejected outright. It is still bouncing between the membership committee and the retail agents' committee, which apparently wants the membership committee to think again.

Growing strength of South Africa's black trade unions

Johannesburg

The labour guidelines issued recently by the South African Chamber of Industries (FCI) are the first explicit recognition by a major business organization of the changing balance of power in the country's factories. They represent a near victory for the black trade unionism among blacks and pose a threat to the monopoly that white unions have hitherto enjoyed in negotiating black (as well as white) wages.

The chamber guidelines also signal a growing impatience among employers with the Government's fumbling of the new labour dispensation introduced eighteen months ago in the wake of the Wiehahn report on industrial relations.

The most important of the recommendations made by the FCI to affiliated companies is that they should stop trying to cold-shoulder the more militant sections of the black union movement. Behind this change of approach lies the recognition that these unions have been waging in the country's factories.

Though the post-Wiehahn system gave black unions the right to seek official registration, most employers were reluctant to do so because of the conditions and controls attached. The effectiveness of a union, they argued, depended not on whether some official in Pretoria had given it a stamp of approval, but on the strength of its shop-floor support.

With the backing of the authorities and of every business organization, suspicious employers used to freeze these "independent" unions out of their factories. In their place they sought to promote "parallel" unions for blacks run by white trade unions which were already registered and eager to keep black worker organizations docile.

Where parallel unions did not exist, employers still refused to deal with independent unregistered black unions, telling their black employees to channel their demands through factory liaison committees (half of whose membership may by law be appointed by management).

Acrimonious disputes over independent unregistered unions' demands for recognition by employers were at the root of much of South Africa's industrial unrest last year. The usual pattern was for workers to go on strike after alleged victimization by management of shop stewards or other union leaders. Similar accusations have been made by unions during some of the dozen strikes that have occurred already in 1981.

Independent unions also suspect that some company managements may have been behind the detention without trial of 20 or more union officials last year.

Despite difficulties the independent unions attracted more and more worker support. More often than not, companies found that their efforts to channel blacks into parallel unions simply damned those unions in the eyes of the workers. Even the minister of manpower utilization, Mr Fanie Botha, began to caution employers against trying to force their employees into "sweetheart" unions, though he still urged them not to have any dealings with unregistered black unions.

Ten years ago it would have been easy for companies to destroy the independent black unions, simply by firing all workers who were members and hiring replacements from the country's huge pool of black unemployed. But the severe shortage of skilled white manpower is forcing employers to train blacks for more senior jobs and this small supply of skilled blacks has now acquired bargaining strength. This was conclusively proved during the two great watershed strikes at Ford and Volkswagen in the Eastern Cape last year.

The FCI has now publicly recognized the utility of trying to tell black workers which unions are acceptable and which are not. The choice must be left to them, even if they exercise it in favour of independent unregistered unions. It is the utmost importance, the FCI says, for employers not to refuse to talk to emerging unions. It was also essential for companies to be democratic and neither foster nor hamper parallel unions.

The chamber adds that it is aware of the risks attached to recognizing unions outside the industrial relations structure laid down by the government, but says that this is "trust and goodwill".

The chief implication of what the FCI is saying—and one which opens the way to a clash between Pretoria and the business sector—is that Mr Botha's promised changes to the union registration system succeed in

persuading all black unions to register—is that company managements should now regard the degree of shop-floor support, rather than official registration, as the main test of a union's acceptability.

In reversing its earlier stand on this issue, the chamber is bringing its policy more into line with the EEC code of fair labour practice for European companies in South Africa (some of whom have been among the companies accused of victimizing independent unions). Mr Bill Vose, the prime mover of the code—then labour attaché at the British embassy in Pretoria—was always at pains to stress that its first requirement was for companies to be democratic and neither foster nor hamper parallel unions.

Union reaction to the FCI's guidelines has been cautious. Mr Henry Chipaya, a prominent black union official, said that they were a "major step", but he wanted to know whether they would be "translated into meaningful and positive action". In the past, he said, guidelines had often not left companies drawing blood.

If employers do follow them, the guidelines could ultimately lead to a reexamination of the established collective bargaining system in which employers and white unions set wages and working conditions on an industry-wide basis through the industrial councils covering different sectors.

The failure of many of the parallel unions they have been trying to set up is undoubtedly an important factor in prompting the FCI to urge its members to talk to the independent unions directly instead, or by-passing the white intermediaries.

Already, seven out of every ten workers in South Africa are black. That proportion will increase and they will gain greater skills. Inevitably, realistic employers will increasingly seek accommodation with them rather than with the old white unions and their diminishing representativeness.

John Kane-Berman

Bitterness in Belgium's centre

Industry in Europe
Seneffe, Belgium

are the large-scale examples of a pattern that prevails throughout the central area of Belgium. On the outskirts of the old market town of Seneffe, Walloon Brabant, empty factories and warehouses bear witness to the withdrawal of foreign investment from the country and the decline of the traditional textile, clothing and paper making industries.

With the recession continuing, Belgium has learnt the hard way that foreign investment is vulnerable.

New companies have been discouraged from coming to Belgium as labour costs have risen since the early 1970s to be the highest in the European Community and labour laws have made it difficult to shed any part of a workforce when economic conditions deteriorate.

The drying up of foreign investment has applied in the Flemish speaking north of the country as well as the French-speaking south. But in Wallonia the problem is more serious, because it has added to the difficulties arising from the gradual decay of the old zone of heavy industry between Charleroi and Liège.

At Seneffe, the unions and workforce hold British Leyland responsible for their predicament. They argue that the plant could have survived with higher investment and a new model to replace the Mini and Allegro.

But their bitter experience has been repeated on a smaller scale elsewhere in the centre of Belgium. It is only now that the area, which straddles the provinces of Walloon Brabant and Hainaut and hence has no natural administrative centre, is generating a regional consciousness of its own.

The tragedy is that this growing awareness may be too late to prevent the "centre" from becoming an economic wasteland.

Peter Norman

Seneffe and Fabela-Tubize

For the Belgian Government the closure means that another problem region has been added to the depressed areas of Verviers, Liège and Charleroi in Wallonia, the French-speaking southern part of the country.

The village of Seneffe is about 35 kilometres south of Brussels. Surrounded by heavy, clayey pasture land, with an overgrown church at its centre and a new estate of flat-roofed "seminis" to the south, it looks rather more prosperous than the usual Belgian village.

The reason for this prosperity is the Leyland factory—lies a kilometre or so away on the south side of the Brussels-Charleroi canal. It is a functional concrete and metal structure, typical of the factories built in the boom years of the 1950s and 1960s when Belgium was a mecca for foreign investors and appeared to be successfully transforming its industrial base away from iron, steel and coal situated just a few kilometres to the

Business Diary profile: George Mathewson and the SDA

As a weapon to win industry and investment for Scotland, the Scottish Development Agency has lately looked somewhat blunted. The committee of Scottish MPs considering inward investment even suggested that the agency had failed to contribute a single job to Scotland—a charge more easily made than proved.

Certainly, the recession and the change of Government have adversely affected the agency's confidence in its two important and controversial functions—direct investment in industry and projecting Scotland overseas.

With morale down and uncertainty rising, enter a new man as chief executive. Dr George Mathewson takes over today at a critical point in the SDA's history.

He sees the job as the challenge it clearly is. He will head an organization with a remit much broader than that of the National Enterprise Board—encompassing promotion of industry in Scotland, factory building, large- and small-scale risk investment and clearing the wastelands left by old industry.

It was this range of activity, and the possibility of cross-disciplinary work that helped to attract Mathewson. "Of course, that makes for its own management problems."

Mathewson is 40, a Scot with a firm faith that Scotland can be rejuvenated into a formidable industrial force. His career so far has been impeccable and in many respects tailored to the job. He joins the agency Finance Corporation and Commercial Finance Corporation, Britain's largest source of venture capital and long-term finance for small and medium-sized companies.

Mathewson was a director and assistant general manager in ICPC looking after a third or so of the corporation's area offices, covering about 1,000 companies. He was involved in business development and the various facets of investment in private companies.



It's not what you've got, but what you do with it: George Mathewson, chairman from today of the Scottish Development Agency.

advanced technology avionics systems for Bell Aerospace Corporation. During that time he added a master's degree in business administration from Canisius College, Buffalo, New York, to his honours degree in applied physics from St Andrews University in Scotland.

He thus takes up the desk recently vacated by Mr Lewis Robertson as a

professional businessman, who is also a scientist able to judge the risks in high technology projects.

Robertson was the founder chief executive of the SDA. He announced he would not be seeking reappointment because he wished to return to the private industry. He said at the time that if he left it another five years he would be too old. He is a non-executive director of Scottish and Newcastle but no firm plans for his future have been announced.

Colleagues of Mathewson described him as "addicted to work". One said: "Anyone appointed to such a high position at his age, in an organization devoted to risk ventures has to be good."

But will Mathewson handle the political shifts which now bedevil the agency's work? It is probably true that the SDA now takes no greater risk in its so-called venture capital projects than many banks and private investment institutions in Scotland. Since the losses in the Stonefield truck debacle the agency has confined itself to well-secured investments.

The Scottish Office obliged the SDA to call in the Receiver to Stonefield. This was necessary, the Scottish Office argued, for the simple reason that although the truck, designed for rough terrain, might be a superb concept it could not survive the roughest terrain of all—a market place without orders.

Mathewson is not without experience in dealing with politicians and civil servants. Those with whom he was concerned were American, "but you would be surprised how many of the rules are the same".

He very nearly joined the British Civil Service before going to the ICSC and with that body he got to know the Department of Industry well.

"That side of things is not completely new to me. I am not saying it is going to be difficult, but I am aware of how difficult it can be."

Certainly, the SDA could hardly have

found a closer blend of technical, investment and management expertise in one person to restore its confidence and to reestablish it in the role of providing bright ideas to men with ideas, empty pockets and negligible security.

Investment takes up barely 3 per cent of the agency's total budget and the press conference on the bad news centred too much on the bad news. "A lot of excellent and successful work is done which does not have enough publicity," he says.

He arrives at the agency just ahead of a White Paper expected in a couple of weeks which, it is hoped, will end the friction between the SDA and the Scottish Economic Planning Department. It is thought that a new joint body will coordinate the industrial promotion role of the two organizations with a senior civil servant from the planning department in control but housed in the SDA building with agency staff forming the new link.

Mathewson will be starting his new job with no previous acquaintance but with other recently appointed civil servants—Dr Gavin McCrone as head of the planning department and James Scott, who directs the department's operation in Glasgow. He hopes there will be some pay-off this year from the growing attention shown recently by overseas industrialists in the electronics and technological areas. Importing technology could allow Scotland to leapfrog the rest of the world in some areas and it could then add its own experience and ability to develop from there.

But was it simply a question of shedding old industry and investing in high technology? "Not anything like as straightforward as that," he says. A lot of traditional industries had plenty of steam left in them.

Slugged down, more efficient and geared to the markets he expects to see some phoenixes rising from their ashes.

Ronald Faux

GRA Property Trust to make final payment

By Our Financial Staff
GRA Property Trust, the greyhound racing and property group, has said it is now in a position to pay the final 15p in the pound to creditors.

This should mark the end of the Scheme of Arrangement entered into in 1976 as an alternative to liquidation. But Mr Jack Aaronson, GRA chairman brought in to administer the scheme, says that the liability under guarantees given by the company in respect of certain Kay Bevan contingent creditors had not yet been determined and no amount has been admitted in respect of these external debts.

"The terms of the Scheme of Arrangement require the scheme to continue until satisfactory arrangements have been made with these creditors so that their claims can either be admitted and paid or withdrawn," he said.

This final payment of £445,662 is the last of total external admitted debts of around £2.97m.

The payment was made on pre-tax profits for the year to the end of last October down from just over £1m to £940,000 on a turnover up from £10.8m to £11.9m.

Mr Aaronson said that, despite a good first half, the inevitable impact of the deepening recession resulted in reduced profits. Major shareholder of GRA is the ICI Pension Fund which holds £563,000 of loan stock convertible into ordinary shares.

Minority shareholders have been concerned that on conversion the fund would be able to acquire a major stake in the group fairly cheaply.

There were moves to buy the stake but those were finally thwarted last August when the pension fund securities gave notice that it will take up the option to convert the loan notes into 11.26 million ordinary shares giving them a 26.3 per cent stake. The shares were picked up at 20p.

Meanwhile, GRA shares, traded in the stock market under the special rule 163 (2), were active last week. The price opened at 15p, dropped to 13p and ended the week at 14p.

Grinshawe down in half year

Over the half year to October 31, Grinshawe Holdings' turnover rose from £2.2m to £2.8m but profit on trading shrank from £115,000 to £36,000. This is before charging interest of £111,000 against £33,000.

Mr Thomas Kenny, chairman, says that as yet there is little sign of any positive improvement. "We have taken the

usual steps to reduce the value of working capital. Subsidiary company management has been reinforced at points where weaknesses were beginning to show."

Briefly

Robertson Foods: The directors of Robertson Foods have considered the offer for Robertson announced by Amalgamated Group on January 28, 1981. Following discussions with their financial advisers, Hill Samuel & Co, the directors have decided that the offer is not in the best interests of the shareholders and that the offer should be rejected.

Brent Chemicals: Shareholders approved proposed acquisition of major part of chemicals division of Sanyo Chemical Company. Brent have warned the 1980 results, due next month, will show pre-tax profits "slightly below" the previous year.

R. Paradise: Proposed rights issue on basis of 11-for-5 at 45p per share to raise about £1.45m after expenses. Purpose of issue is to satisfy the £775,000 cost of acquiring new companies and to cut bank borrowings. For the 12 months to April 30 next, Paradise forecasts that consolidated pre-tax profits of the enlarged group will be not less than £315,000.

Higher offer for Colmore: Nesco Investments have increased their offer for Colmore Investments to 33p cash per share. This follows the purchase of a further 64,380 ordinary shares in Colmore (about 1.62 per cent) at 33p each, bringing Nesco's holding to 1.42 million shares (25.43 per cent) and, with acceptance of the offer, a total of about 50.03 per cent.

Veolia Stone: Mr Alfred Collins, chairman, says in his annual report that it would be unreasonable to expect profits in the current year to exceed last year's earnings of £815,000. However, every effort will be made to minimize the anticipated problems of 1981.

Ransome Hoffman Pollard: Chairman told the annual meeting that the year has not had an easy start and there has been a significant fall in UK deliveries during the first quarter, reflecting the severe effects of the de-stocking cycle. "We hope that the turning point may soon be reached and that the order position will begin to improve."

Burco Deau: Mr Spencer Crookenden, chairman, says in his annual report that the recession shows no signs of easing. "Bank borrowings continue to be well within the facilities agreed by our bankers who have been most understanding and helpful in this difficult year for the company." Pre-tax profit for the year to last September fell from £1.17m to a loss of £1.1m.

API still finds it tough to make profit

Associated Paper Industries, the Cheshire-based group which reported a net £3.9m loss last year after substantial closures and a 33 per cent cut in the workforce, is still finding it difficult to make profits.

Mr Charles Rawlinson, chairman, tells shareholders in his annual report out today that current trading conditions are not good, but steps taken to eliminate fundamental problems put API in a position where it can benefit greatly from the upturn in demand when it comes.

"We are more competitive and a lot leaner than we were, there is more to do, but we are confident of the outcome even if in the short-term things remain difficult," he said.

API's results for the year to last September show a trading profit on its continuing operations down from £2.4m to £2.1m. A near doubled interest charge and losses on closed operations of just over £1m brought the pre-tax profit down from £1.9m to £332,089.

However, full provision for all closure costs relating to The Vale Board Mills, Cooke & Nuttall and two overseas subsidiaries of £3.9m pushed the group into the red.

Joint liquidators announced for Rivington Reed

Joint liquidators of Rivington Reed, whose chairman, Mr Graham Ferguson Lacey, has a 28.3 per cent stake, have been announced as Mr Peter Fleisher, of accountants Thornton Baker, and Mr Frank Taylor, of Arthur Young McLelland Moores.

Rivington is the holding company of a textile group with 15 subsidiaries, many, but not all, of which have been in receivership since May last year. Mr Fleisher said the appointments are subject of confirmation by the High Court and that they cannot commence work until the receiver has completed the disposal of those companies which could be sold.

In the last year for which audited accounts are available, to March, 1979, group turnover was £23m and there was a £1m loss. At that time borrowings were put at £4.14m with creditors owed £6.77m. Net assets stood at £10.95m.

Lonrho results should be up sharply

Companies reporting this week include Lonrho, electronic components manufacturer Unitech, and the Prestige Group. Supermarkets group Hillards also releases figures.

Economic news starts off today with details of house prices and mortgage starts from the building societies and ends on Friday with the number of housing starts and completions in December from the Department of the Environment, along with figures on house renovations in the final quarter of 1980.

But the star spot is taken up by the United Kingdom official reserves for January, which the Treasury announces on Tuesday. That day also sees the Bank of England's figures for capital issues and redemptions. Thursday brings provisional figures of vehicle production in January, from the Department of Industry.

Hillards announces its interim figures to the end of October today. Analysts are expecting some improvement in margins on top of higher turnover from the series of store openings last year.

However, that improvement will show up more against the difficult second part of last year than the first period; so interim profits of between £1.3m and £1.7m are forecast now against £1.3m with full-year profits rising towards £3.2m against £2.2m pre-tax.

Food volume is thought to be good at Hillards, which has been able to improve its margins after losing ground last year. Non-food is a small portion of total turnover but the five big stores opened between March, 1979, and August, 1980, carry a larger share of non-food items than the older, smaller stores and therefore should be less profitable than expected, with the difficult economic climate cut-

ring spending on the non-food side.

The group has also revamped its non-food operation recently and there is concern in the City that the timing of that operation was unfortunate. However, dividend the first year is expected to rise benefiting from good cover and the expected better second half.

With not much lined up to provide a boost to next year, analysts are taking a cautious long-term view of the shares.

Tuesday sees Prestige, the manufacturer of small household goods, releasing preliminary figures for 1980. Pre-tax profits are expected to be around £5m to £5.5m, against £3.86m the previous year. But the feeling is that the final dividend will be maintained, as was the interim. American Home Products owns 74 per cent of the equity.

Prestige's most important profit-earner is the home market, which was hit by de-stocking earlier in the year but has a better Christmas season than expected. The group is projected to some extent from the decline in consumer spending because of its wide range of small products, some of the largest of its kitchen products are the successful slow electric and pressure cookers. As a result it is less prone to the recession now than some of the bigger groups, but equally will benefit less dramatically from any upturn.

Exports to Europe have been hit by the strengthening pound, which has trimmed margins, but the overseas manufacturing interests in Australia and South Africa are serving as a buoyant markets and thought to be doing well, though the Euro-

pean side is catching the recession.

Looking ahead, analysts are hoping for an indication from the company of whether the improvement before Christmas has lasted, but think that a slow-down in de-stocking will give the first half of this year a filip even if nothing else does.

Unitech also reports on Tuesday, with the first set of interim figures to include German electrical components distributor Enarechnik, acquired in March, 1980.

Including Enarechnik's contribution, analysts are looking for between £2.3m and £2.5m pre-tax for the first half, with the "original" company not showing much improvement on the previous interim figure of £2m. This is because the high

technology components distribution side has seen prices fall steeply and in the depressed economic climate has not been able to compensate with higher volume.

Lonrho's 1979-80 figures come out on Thursday. Forecasts range from about £125m up to £136m against £76.5m with good results expected

from gold, platinum, sugar and hotel operations but poor performance from the United Kingdom cargo, engineering and manufacturing interests, including Dutton-Forsyth and Dunford & Elliot.

The figures will contain a full year of SUITS, Princess Properties International and the 29.5 per cent stake in House of Fraser, which is estimated to add around £9m to profits this year.

Exchange rates went against Lonrho last year, but commodity prices favoured it, and 1979's Christmas trade is said to have been good. At the time of the rights issue the group said it would maintain the previous final dividend payment on the increased capital.

TODAY Interims:—Dura Mill, Hillards, Regional Props, William Sommerville & Son, and Vibroplant Bldgs.

Finals:—None announced.

TOMORROW Interims:—Cowan, De Groot, Gold Fields of South Africa, Steinberg Group and Unitech.

Finals:—English & New York Trust, Prestige Group and UC Investments.

WEDNESDAY Interims:—Amal Tin Mines of Nigeria, City of London Brewery & Investment Trust (interim results), and Benn Bros.

Finals:—Sterling Trust.

THURSDAY Interims:—None announced.

Finals:—Aaronsen Bros, Blundell-Pemrogaz Bldgs and Lonrho.

FRIDAY Interims:—Armour Trust (amended), Second Alliance Trust, Sentrum, and Stoddard Bldgs.

Finals:—British American & General Trust, and Glasgow Stockholders Trust.

Catherine Gunn

Oil shares expected to leap after slow start

North Sea oil has been under scrutiny for the eighth running by the team at P & Co, who say that share price movement in 1981 will fall into three distinct time phases.

During the early part of year oil shares will perform relatively poorly, but the summer will bring the seasonal interest in the North Sea drilling results. "From third quarter onwards we see a really strong trend in share prices as the Opec counter-gather for the December fixing against a background of improving economic activity in the western world," Mr Fr Watts, Mr Clive Callow and Simon Wharmby say.

Among the majors, it is highlighted by where Beaufort Sea drilling activity will emphasize the air.

Brokers' views

Alaskan position, and International Thomson Organisation where the disposal of Tir Newspapers will focus attention on its oil and asset position. Tricentral, which is selling an overvalued discount estimated net worth, Woodside of Australia are a recommended.

Among the smaller independents, they recommend A Energy because of its sumo drilling programme offshore the Irish Republic, Associated Newspapers with its own balance-sheet and Candace, its "outstanding onshore assets and excellent management and suggest switch from Marine and Gass & Oil Area as cash flow from Buchan will start.

Care Seabag has cast its vote over the leading Australian and the analysts, Barry Aling and Mr Paul Me point out that share prices of the smaller exploration companies have become overheated there are some that remain attractive.

At home, Moore Gove & Co looked at a much smaller sector, advertising agencies, and believes that Geers Gro one of the two London-quoted agencies, is at an interesting stage.

Geers Gross, which has market capitalization of £4 compared with Saatchi & Saatchi's £14.4m, has boosted earnings a share from 2.9p to 7.1p in the last five years. It is basis for its investment premises lies in its US operation which are well established with Saatchi & Saatchi is trying to move into that market.

Geers Gross is now ready to compete for accounts with budgets of up to £25m (£10.5m). The gaining of only one such account could dramatically increase profitability without the necessity of increased overheads," Mr K. L. G. Shepper says.

He also criticizes the American experience that reductions in advertising budgets during a economic crisis are a recipe for irrecoverable loss of market share.

Rosemary Unsworth

Bank Base Rates

ABN Bank 14%
Barclays 14%
BCCI 14%
Consolidated Crdis 14%
C. Hoare & Co 14%
Lloyds Bank 14%
Midland Bank 14%
Nat Westminster 14%
Ransminister 14%
TSB 14%
Williams & Glyn's 14%

* T. day deposit on basis of £10,000 and under 17% at 15.00, 15.00, 15% over £50,000 15.00

HAMPTON TRUST LIMITED
1 for 8 Rights Issue
Provisional allotment letters in respect of the above issue were despatched on 24 January 1981. All enquiries in connection with the issue should be addressed to the Company Secretary, The Royal Bank of Scotland Limited, Registrar's Department, PO Box 88, St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2AG, telephone 031-555 8555 ext. 2558. The last date for acceptance and payment in full is 13th February, 1981.

M. J. H. Nightingale & Co. Limited
27/28 Lovat Lane London EC3R 8EB Telephone 01-621 1212
The Over-the-Counter Market

Capitalisation £000's	Company	Last Price	Ch or F	Gross Divid	Yld	P/E
3,642	Airsprung Group	63	-1	6.7	10.6	5.7
1,025	Armitage & Rhodes	41	-1	4.4	3.4	16.9
11,548	Bardon Hill	189	-9	9.7	5.1	7.1
7,231	Deborah Services	94	-2	5.5	5.0	4.7
4,199	Frank Horsell	112	-2	6.4	3.7	3.5
7,946	Frederick Parker	55	-2	11.0	20.0	2.5
1,639	George Blair	77	-	3.1	4.0	-
2,675	Jackson Group	107	-	6.9	6.4	4.1
16,562	James Burrough	120	+1	7.9	6.6	9.8
3,366	Robert Jenkins	330	-4	31.3	9.5	-
2,590	Scruttons "A"	53	-	5.3	10.0	3.8
3,323	Torrey Limited	216	-1	15.1	7.0	3.7
2,671	Twinklark Ord	121	-	-	-	-
2,075	Twinklark 15% ULS	76	-1	15.0	19.7	-
5,493	Unilock Holdings	36	-	3.0	8.3	5.5
12,779	Walter Alexander	101	-	5.7	5.6	5.6
6,021	W. S. Yates	258	+4	12.1	4.7	4.2

Lord Carrington on Britain's priorities in Europe

Wilhelm Haferkamp on external challenges to the Community

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Why life in the toy world is not all fun and games

The Christmas of 1979 and 1980 were probably the unhappiest and the most troubled ever experienced by the UK toy industry. However, this date is October 15 in the retailer's diary. Volume sales over the period were down by seven per cent on total market sales of £700m. This included both United Kingdom exports and imports. Retailers delayed their buying until November and the downturn in consumer spending left both stores and manufacturers with excess

the final dividend will be passed with losses estimated at £7m. Recovery will not show through until the next financial year, but analysts think that its present low rating should be a firm one. The full effects of reorganisation are felt. The workforce was cut by a fifth from 7,500.

Mettoy, makers of "Corgi" toys, also a big exporter, fell into similar troubles. In the six months to September the group lost £2.1m against profits of £703,000, with sales falling off to £16.4m. The shares are just above the year's low at 18p and yield 14.6 per cent. After rationalization costs last year of £128,000, a further £400,000 is expected. The interim dividend was passed.

Although Berwick Timpo reported losses in the half year of £288,000, it is confidently looking to full-year profits of between £500,000 and £900,000. It maintained the interim gross dividend at the half-way stage and is expected to recommend an unchanged gross total of 8.5p for the year. But the shares at 54p, yielding 15.9 per cent on a p/e ratio of 2.14 on stated earnings, are perhaps not fully reflecting the group's potential.

Losses for the half year are not unusual in an industry where traditionally 90 per cent of profits are made in the second half of the year. This year the losses were due mainly to the cost of closing two loss-making subsidiaries. In 1979 the group saw profits of £1.5m on sales of £16.8m. Sales this year are expected to drop to £13m.

Cowan de Groot is also fairly well insulated from the worst troubles since toy sales account for only 24 per cent of total turnover. The profit contribution is slightly higher at 30 per cent, and the company has protected its toy market by importing 60 per cent of sales direct to the larger stores from the Far East. Profits in the year to exports totalled £2.6m on sales up to £44.09m and "satisfactory" profits are expected in the interim results due tomorrow.

With the group's electrical and hardware division expanding, the shares perhaps under-rate its potential. At 54p, they yield 9.2 per cent on a stated p/e of 3.3.

The influx of imports from the US and Japan has been steadily rising since 1975 but it has yet to have its full impact on the toy market. It is for this reason that the extent of the recovery in the sector cannot be judged for another four or five years.

Margaret Pagano



Few customers share the industry's worries.

Business appointments

Morgan Crucible names two new directors

Mr D. A. M. Dunbar and Dr E. B. Farmer have become directors of Morgan Crucible.

Mr John Floyd is leaving Panmure Gordon & Company on January 1 to become a non-executive director of Lloyd Oil Participations. He remains an associate of Panmure Gordon.

Mr Donald Patience has become director and manager of Finance Corporation for Industry, a member of the Finance for Industry Group. R. M. H. Heseltine is now director for corporate development of Croda International.

Mr J. Burnett-Stuart, who has been deputy chairman of Robert Fleming Holdings since 1975, is to succeed Mr W. B. Morton as its chairman and director of Robert Fleming & Co. Mr D. G. Thomas will become deputy chairman of Robert Fleming Holdings.

Mr Geoffrey J. Redmond, formerly managing director of Seddon Atkinson Vehicles, has been made financial director and Dr Michael Bamer has joined the board as a non-executive director. Mr Bamer is an assistant director of Barclays Merchant Bank, the company's financial adviser.

Mr Douglas McKean has been reappointed by the Treasury to his post on the board of the Agricultural Mortgage Corporation.

Mr Paul S. J. Zatz has become company secretary of Clyde Petroleum.

Mr John A. Talbot has been made a partner of Spicer and Pegler. Mr Reginald J. Glisson and Mr Michael G. Crawford have retired as partners.

Mr David M. Thomson has been named a local director of Singer and Friedlander.

مكتبة من الأصح

MARKET REPORTS

Oil strikes more optimistic note

Oil strikes more optimistic note. The oil market is showing signs of recovery after a period of pessimism. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has revised its forecast for oil demand, suggesting a more optimistic outlook for the future. The market is also responding positively to news of a potential deal between OPEC and non-OPEC countries to stabilize oil prices.

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Freight

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Gold issues aimed at sophisticated investors

Gold issues aimed at sophisticated investors. The first Eurobond issue to be denominated in gold appears to be a success. The issue was oversubscribed, indicating a strong demand for gold-denominated securities among sophisticated investors. The success of this issue suggests that gold is still a valuable asset for investors seeking to hedge against inflation.

Why 1981 may not be a disaster year for food

Why 1981 may not be a disaster year for food. After a series of gloomy reports in recent months, the latest offering from the International Wheat Council strikes a more optimistic note. There is a chance that this year will not see the disaster in world food supplies that has been forecast.

Euromarkets

Euromarkets. The issuer, Refinint International NV, is a subsidiary of RMI Refinery, a Rhine Island-based company that specializes in reclaiming gold, silver and other metals from scrap metal and which usually sells the partially refined product to other refiners.

Eurobond prices (yields and premiums)

Issue	Yield	Premium
Refinint International NV	10.5%	1.5%
Other Eurobonds	11.0%	2.0%

Commodities

Commodities. The market for commodities is showing signs of recovery after a period of pessimism. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has revised its forecast for oil demand, suggesting a more optimistic outlook for the future. The market is also responding positively to news of a potential deal between OPEC and non-OPEC countries to stabilize oil prices.

Unit Trust Prices—change on the week

Unit Trust Prices—change on the week. FT Index change on week 466.3 +10.6 (2.3%).

Overseas and International Funds

Fund Name	Current Price	Change
Overseas Fund	10.5	+0.5
International Fund	11.0	+0.5

Authorized Unit Trusts	Current Price	Change
Overseas Fund	10.5	+0.5
International Fund	11.0	+0.5

Overseas and International Funds	Current Price	Change
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Commercial property

Development gamble at White City

The future of GRA Property Trust's prize properties still remains in doubt. The jewel in GRA's crown is the 16.5-acre White City Stadium, west London, which is thought to be the largest cash earner for the group out of all the dog racing tracks it owns.

Development plans have been swishing around the planning system for a decade. And clearly it was redevelopment of part of the site which European Ferries had in mind when it launched a bid for GRA last year.

Located only a few miles from Marble Arch, the White City area was once considered as London's terminal for the proposed Channel tunnel link. With this in mind, Stock Conversion and Investment Trust, which has had an option to buy the site since 1969, put forward a scheme to redevelop part of the site into

a hotel, exhibition and warehouse centre. But when it came to submitting detailed proposals for the scheme Hammersmith council's planners rejected the plans because of what they described as an attempt to "bulk out" the hotel and the exhibition space.

Naturally, the developer appealed, and after a planning inquiry the scheme was finally rejected last year as being unsuitable.

Under the £1.7m sale agreement for the White City site, completion will take place at the end of this year. But with completion only 11 months away it is surprising that no fresh proposals have been submitted by Stock Conversion for development of the site.

In the original scheme, the racing track would have been remodelled to cover only four of the 16.5 acres, allowing Stock Conversion a large site for other development.

It seems a strong possibility that when the sale is completed at the end of the year and Stock Conversion takes full ownership, that the stadium will be leased back to GRA.

Development of the stadium and surrounding land will take several years, and GRA could expect full use of the track during this period. But when re-development goes ahead then the racing group will have to be

satisfied with running a considerably smaller stadium.

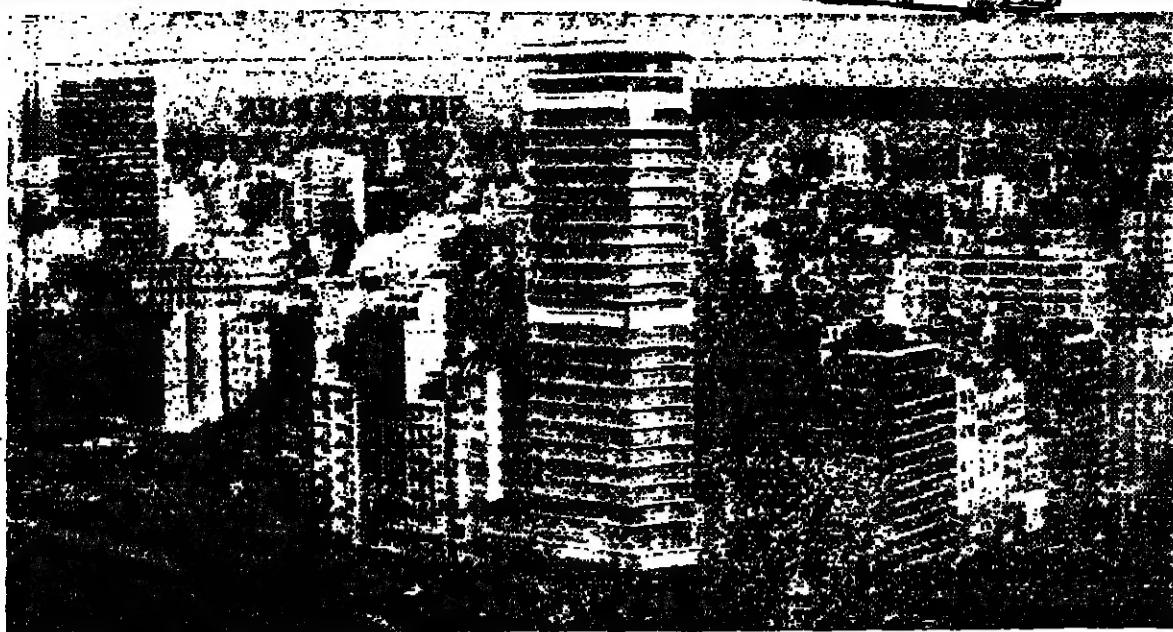
As plans to build a Channel tunnel still remain fairly remote, it is clear Stock Conversion will have to rethink its original development proposals for the site.

The early scheme included a 1,000-bed hotel but with high building costs, and the consequently large number of rooms necessary to recoup capital investment, it would seem that this element would have to be re-examined. A smaller hotel would appear more appropriate but set in the midst of an industrial estate would make marketing difficult.

Hammersmith has become a hive of development activity over the last few years and the borough would welcome a re-development of the White City which provided jobs and raised more revenue through rates.

Britain may have lost most of its colonies but it continues to dominate the world property market either through the buying power of the pension funds and other institutions or the spreading network of British estate agents.

London agents Richard Ellis have been given the task of selling the Pirelli Group's 200,000 sq ft office building in Buenos Aires for an asking price of \$34.5m. The international tyre group has around 31,000 sq ft, other tenants have leased nine



Pirelli Group is selling its Buenos Aires offices for \$34.5m through Richard Ellis.

floors and a further seven are available for letting.

On completion of the sale Ellis estimate the net receivable rent will be about \$3.5m, giving the purchaser around 10 per cent yield on the asking price.

One interesting aspect of the deal is that Pirelli may take the vacant seven floors in the building, known as Torre Pirelli.

Situated in the city's central business district, Torre Pirelli has been attracting a great deal

of attention from international investors.

Mr Ian White, of Richard Ellis, says talks have taken place with Middle East investors as well as local Argentines. He reports that negotiations with one party are at a fairly advanced stage, and if all goes well, the building could be sold by the end of February.

In South-east Asia, property prices are likely to continue climbing throughout this year

but may reflect a slower growth than the explosion which has been witnessed in more recent times, according to Jones Lang Wootton in its latest survey of the area.

The agents note the rise in property values has been on the back of strong economic growth which in turn has attracted many international corporations and financial institutions and consequently boosted land prices and office rents. This trend is expected

to continue and demand for first class office buildings in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong will continue to be high.

In Singapore, for example, rents for the best located office space surged by 67 per cent. The situation will be further fuelled by the lack of new office space coming on to the market this year. Only 26,000 sq metres of additional office space is scheduled for completion in 1981, and much of this is already committed, say the agents.

Over the next five years an average of 80,600 sq metres of office accommodation will be constructed.

Hongkong will be in for a quieter time and there are likely to be some short term corrections in certain areas of the market where speculation has pushed prices too far, such as office rents and commercial land values. Demand from international companies helped to boost rents by about 65 per cent last year, but the agents say that office rents at \$HK250 a square metre may have peaked.

Rents are expected to stabilize later this year as more office accommodation comes on to the market. In the next two years about 743,000 sq metres (almost 8m sq ft) will be completed—equivalent to about one third of existing office space.

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PERSONAL CHOICE

Broadcasting Guide

Edited by Peter Dear

TELEVISION

BBC 1

9.00 am For Schools. Colleges: Jobs for the disabled. 9.30 Microscopes and Molecules. 9.52 Read On! 10.15 Music. 10.38 Maths. 11.00 Merry-go-round. 11.25 You and Me (see Schools). 11.40 Industrial Relations. Closes at 12.05 pm.

1.00 Pebble Mill at One. Donny MacLeod, with the help of an American, Clifton Karihu, explores parts of the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto. But the tourist rarely sees: 1.45 Music. 1.50 2.01 For Schools. Colleges: Words and Pictures. 2.18 Europe from the air. 2.40 The first week of work.

3.00 When the Tough Breaks. John Thaw with advice for parents who believe their children are misbehaving. 3.15 The Politics of the Mountains. Peter Taylor reports from the Mount Pleasant United Reform Church. 3.35 Play School (shown earlier on BBC 2). 4.00 Undercover. 4.15 The New Hero is in the unlikely disguise of a belly-dancer (r). 4.25 Jackanory. 4.30 The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks.

BBC 2

10.00 am Focus. The fourth in a series of ten programmes on Higher Education (r). 10.25 Working with Young People. A series of programmes to help the school leaver and the young person understand one another (r). 10.50 Play School. Today's story is about the children of the Spot? by Eric Hill. The presenter is Chloe Ashcroft and Ben Thomas. 11.25 Westway. Another programme on the road, in which Barry Took helps people who have difficulty in filling in job application forms. Closes at 11.40.

1.15 pm Let's Go. Brian Rix introduces the programme that aims to help the mentally disabled live a more full life (r). 2.30 Multi-Racial Britain. The fourth in a series of ten films on race relations. 3.00 Embroidery. This afternoon's subject is Surface

BBC 1

4.35 Playhouse. The Rose of Ice by John Challen. The King's only daughter is abducted by the Ice Troll. How will he get her back? 5.00 John Craven's Newsround. News for young people presented by the young person's Kenneth Kendall. 5.10 Blue Peter. A preview of the new St Valentine's Day stamp and an unusual way of sending your message of devotion to your loved one. There is also a new recipe for an edible Valentine. 5.40 News read by Kenneth Kendall. 5.55 Matchweek. Included this evening is Hugh Scully's weekly 1.45 Music. 6.55 Triangle. Drama series about the crew of a ferry that sails the North Sea. 7.20 Star Trek: Day of the Klingons. 7.30 The Starline. The crew of the starship Enterprise as they fight with the Klingons (r). 8.10 Panorama. The Politics of Hunger. Peter Taylor reports from Mali, one of the poorest countries in the world. (See Personal Choice). 9.00 News read by John Edwards. 9.35 Film: The Ruby. 9.55 (1970) starring Barbara Hershey. A first part of the Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks.

BBC 2

Textures (r). 3.30 Wainwright's Law. The rights and responsibilities of the citizens explained in a dramatized form. Closes at 4.15.

4.15 Modern Language Teaching. Huntington School, York, show children modern language laboratory lessons. Closes at 4.40.

5.40 Harold Lloyd. Excerpts from two of his films: The Kid Brother and Take a Chance. 6.00 Michael Gough. A series of short episode drama based on the novel by Jules Verne (r). 6.55 Rock Goes to College. Peter Drummond introduces John Martyn from Chelsea College. 7.40 News with subtitles for the hard-of-hearing. 7.55 Fastway. Towers starring John Cleese. Not only does it awkwardly cause the staff a lot of trouble, he also mislays a great deal of money in this repeat episode about life in a Torquay hotel. 8.30 Grace Kennedy. On her show

When she agrees it leads to all sorts of complications between the couple, the girl and the girl's boyfriend.

11.10 Film 81 introduced by Barry Norman. Three films are reviewed tonight: The Formula, for which Marion Brando was reputedly paid a million dollars a scene; the remake of the Jazz Singer starring Neil Diamond as the Mammy boy and Laurence Olivier as his father; and My Bodyguard, the story of a high school bully who eventually gets his deserts. 11.45 News headlines. 11.50 The Politics of Hunger. Part four of the series on different methods of postal communication presented by Cwyn Richards and Jill Cochrane. 12.10 am Weather.

Regions

REGIONS VARIATIONS: Cymru/Wales: 9.25 am-10.12.11. Yfory. 1.45 pm-2.30 pm. Yfory. 5.55-6.30 pm. Yfory. 7.30-8.00 pm. Yfory. 8.00-8.30 pm. Yfory. 8.30-9.00 pm. Yfory. 9.00-9.30 pm. Yfory. 9.30-10.00 pm. Yfory. 10.00-10.30 pm. Yfory. 10.30-11.00 pm. Yfory. 11.00-11.30 pm. Yfory. 11.30-12.00 pm. Yfory. 12.00-12.30 pm. Yfory. 12.30-1.00 pm. Yfory. 1.00-1.30 pm. Yfory. 1.30-2.00 pm. Yfory. 2.00-2.30 pm. Yfory. 2.30-3.00 pm. Yfory. 3.00-3.30 pm. Yfory. 3.30-4.00 pm. Yfory. 4.00-4.30 pm. Yfory. 4.30-5.00 pm. Yfory. 5.00-5.30 pm. Yfory. 5.30-6.00 pm. Yfory. 6.00-6.30 pm. Yfory. 6.30-7.00 pm. Yfory. 7.00-7.30 pm. Yfory. 7.30-8.00 pm. Yfory. 8.00-8.30 pm. Yfory. 8.30-9.00 pm. Yfory. 9.00-9.30 pm. Yfory. 9.30-10.00 pm. Yfory. 10.00-10.30 pm. Yfory. 10.30-11.00 pm. Yfory. 11.00-11.30 pm. Yfory. 11.30-12.00 pm. Yfory. 12.00-12.30 pm. Yfory. 12.30-1.00 pm. Yfory. 1.00-1.30 pm. Yfory. 1.30-2.00 pm. Yfory. 2.00-2.30 pm. Yfory. 2.30-3.00 pm. Yfory. 3.00-3.30 pm. Yfory. 3.30-4.00 pm. 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